

LOOKING ON
IN
HONG KONG

WINIFRED LECHMERE CLIFT

2

OLIPHANTS LTD.

Library of The Theological Seminary

PRINCETON · NEW JERSEY



PRESENTED BY

Mrs. Charles Henry Greenleaf

BR 1288 .C44

Clift, Winifred Lechmere.

Looking on in Hong Kong

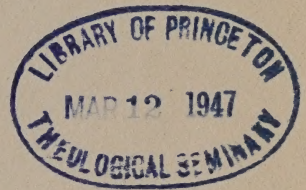
This book was presented to me by its
author as I sailed from Hong Kong on
Feb 15th 1936 - saying: "After you have
read it, give it to some one in
Manila or if you do not like it
throw it into the sea" -

Looking On

in

Hong Kong

Looking On in Hong Kong



By

Winifred Lechmere Clift.

OLIPHANTS Ltd.,

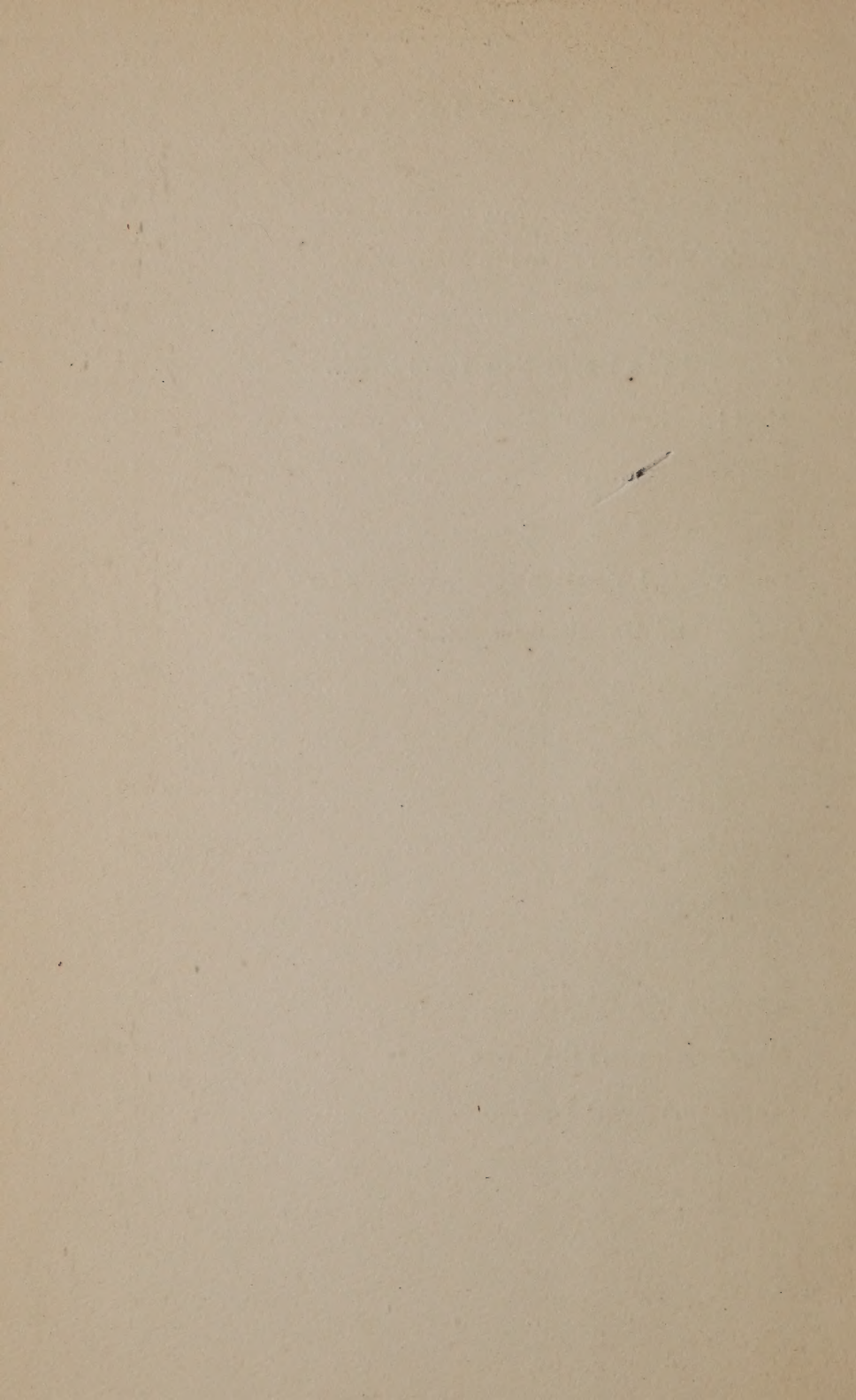
LONDON

—

EDINBURGH.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page.</i>
Amah Talks 	1
The XXth Century Girl in Hong Kong... 	4
Noel 	9
“ —— And a Happy New Year ! ” 	13
Must ! 	16
Borrowed Books 	19
The Budding Fig Tree 	21
On Seeking a Vocation <i>versus</i> Looking for a Job 	24
“The Third Day He Rose Again” 	27
Three Hours in Macao 	29
Wounding —— To Make Whole 	36
Doing It Yourself... 	39
Worrying	41
Stowaways 	44
Spoils from the Treasure Mountain 	47
Thoughts in a Garden 	51
The Crescent and the Cross 	55
The Two Volume Book 	59
“ If ” 	62



Amah Talks

Scene.—A Peak bedroom brightly lighted with electric light. A gentle breeze is fluttering the white curtains. The little cheerful sounds of a thousand insects in the trees come through the wide open windows mingled with the 'sh-sh-' of water flowing down the nullah among the trees.

An Englishwoman is seated before the mirror and a Chinese amah is brushing her hair. As she brushes she talks. The mistress has just announced that she doesn't understand one quarter of what her new amah has been saying:—

"Missis no savee my talkee? My talkee plentee English words. My come Hongkong side long time! What? (with a sudden lapse into Cantonese) You talk *my language*? Then I can talk to you and say all I want and you will understand. I've never had a Missis to work for who understood Chinese words before!

Missis, you've got very nice hair, the kind we Chinese like best, soft and fine, all same silk. And you don't mind it being white. My other Missis like to put powder and mix with water and make their hair yellow colour or brown colour. You are like Chinese, you don't mind grey hair!

Yes, the new cook-boy is my cousin. I think he can't have understood what you said to him this evening. He told me you said he was to buy Sunday's food on Saturday, and not to go to market on Sunday. I said he hadn't understood what you meant. . . . You don't wish him to buy things on Sunday? . . . That is the custom of the Christians. . . . That's very strange! I've been in Hongkong eleven years and I never heard that before! Is that the Jesus-way? Yes, I've heard of him, but I don't know who he is. But if he taught people to do like that and give their cooks a rest on Sunday morning, He must be a very kind Man!

No, my other Missis didn't go to church on Sunday : she goes to play ball. I don't know what God she worships. Master used to stay in the house and go to sleep. He was a good master. He understands the heart of a Chinese. . . .

There was another thing my cousin told me to ask you about. You see he is rather shy, he has never been Number One Boy before, always Number Two. He is very good boy, very careful, and he says the Little Brother in the kitchen is too lazy. You don't know what the Little Brother is? He's what the Red Hairs call the *Makee-Learn*. . . .

What? You don't like me to call your country people the Red Hairs? Then I won't say it again, Missis : but all the Chinese in Hongkong say it all the time. . . No, I see what you mean. I shouldn't like it if you talked of us Chinese as the Black Hairs. . . Yes, the *Makee Learn* is too cheeky. He says the cook is stingy and the new Missis is stingy, because the cook won't let him help himself to bananas and persimmons out of the market basket as he is coming back up the Peak Road. And the house coolie says the same. The old cook always made more than was needed in the dining room, so he got plenty of ice cream and cakes when he had finished washing up.

Yes, there is no doubt my cousin is an excellent and valuable cook and will save you much money. When you've got a good boy like that, it's all right to "eat yourself" (do your own housekeeping) but otherwise it's cheaper as the foreign men do when they share a house, three or four together, to "eat the cook" (let the cook feed you by contract). Of course (thoughtfully) you don't get such nice food then, for the cook is afraid to buy too many of the things you like best, or you eat too much and there isn't enough profit for him. . Oh (with a start) I am talking to you as if you were a Chinese! It's so strange to be talking to a Red Ha—an English lady in my own language that I quite forgot!

Yes, Missis, Sunday is the day all the amahs go out for a while. The boys laugh at us. They say there is an Amahs Union. . . Only we haven't got a Club. Haven't you seen us squatting by the roadside under the trees, talk, talk, talking? What do we talk about? Oh, mostly money, and how we like our work, and what we can make on the soap and starch, er—er— I mean how much soap and starch we need for our washing every week. Some of the amahs are very

particular. They say we must protect our selves.

When I worked at King's Place Hotel, I had a young Missis who used to have her breakfast in bed on Sundays and she would ring her bell for me to go up and talk to her, when she felt lonely. And the other amahs were angry with me. They said it wasn't the custom to work on Sunday if you were a wash amah and I shouldn't go up. . . . Yes, I like talking, so I didn't see why I shouldn't go up when my Missis rang her bell even though it was Sunday! . . . Sometimes when we squat by the roadside talking an amah from Canton comes and talks to us about Shameen and tells us all the latest news. . . . But I think Hongkong is the best place to live in. Canton (with a sudden lapse into Pidgin) too bobbery! (Then back into Cantonese.) There are so many things to see in Hongkong. I go to the pictures sometimes, but that is one of the things that puzzles me about the foreigners. Once at the pictures I saw a woman, who had a husband of her own, creep out into the garden to speak to a man, who was not her husband. Then I saw men trying to kill other men, and boys stealing; and once I saw one man push a woman over a precipice . . . all very bad sins. Missis, *why do the the foreigners make pictures of their sins for other nations to look at?*

There now I've finished at last (lapses again into Pidgin) Ai Ya, plentee talkee! Missis savee my Chinese talkee, my likee talkee too much! B'long velly good Missis. My goodamah! All-o-missis talkee me. "Amah, you velly good, my likee you—so fashion. Missis, you wantchee me, makee ring bell two times—I come!"

(She tucks the mosquito net carefully around her mistress and leaves the room closing the door softly behind her. A grateful silence begins, broken only by the chirrup, chirrup of the insects outside in the trees, and the thin sharp note of mosquitoes in the darkened room.)

The Twentieth-Century Girl in Hong Kong

When I-Who-am meet face to face upon my way forlorn
The happy I-Who-might-have-been, the demi-god unborn,
When he with all my dreams fulfilled meets me outfought, outworn,
It is as Sorrow meeting Joy, as Midnight meeting Morn.
He slays me with his pitying eyes, he flays me with his scorn,
When I meet I-Who-might-have-been, the demi-god unborn.

It is a heart-breaking experience, this looking back, this moment when the I-Who-am comes face to face with the I-Who-might-have-been: but that is the middle-aged woman's job. Looking forward is the young girl's glorious privilege, and the dreaming wonderful delicious dreams of the I-Who-may-be. And it is these dreams that stir the heart and fire enthusiasm to be "up and doing" and to make the best of Life and the best of ourselves.

The natural instinct of youth is to want to "have a good time", to be loved and sought after, to be a "success." And everything seems possible to us when we are young. There is nothing we may not accomplish. Time seems to stretch before us like a long, long road, winding away into the blue haze of the distance. There is such *heaps* of time and life is so packed full of good things! Surely some of them are coming our way!

There is no golden rule which will lead to success in life, which will secure us the treasures we grasp after, but there is one thing which is worth remembering and it is this. What makes you worth knowing and loving and seeking as a friend is not your beauty, or your up-to-dateness, or your success in sports—it's just *character*.

"Don't speak to me. *What you are* thunders so loud that I can't hear what you say!" This was the pungent remark of a thinker who tried to see realities.

An American professor addressing his students, the other day, implored them to think for themselves, to *be themselves*. He bemoaned the tendency among present-day students to "mass-thinking." Everybody, he complained, dressed alike, acted alike, and thought alike, until individuality was in danger of being completely submerged.

I think this attitude is the natural result of the fact that woman's struggle for the right to think and act and be educated in the Universities, and to take her place in the world, is now an accomplished fact. She has got what she wanted, but in the nineteenth century she was struggling for it, and a hard struggle she had! When she first began to clamour for University education and a voice in affairs, old-fashioned objectors talked about the danger of women becoming "unsexed," of neglecting their own special sphere in the home. They warned the world that if a woman were allowed to receive a University education, to take up medicine and other professions she would develop into a callous and mannish individual of a most objectionable type.

Punch knew better. As a small child I remember seeing my elders laughing over a picture of a drawing-room well-filled with a company of people, who gazed in awestruck wonder towards a sofa upon which sat a famous professor and a young Girton girl. What abstruse problem is engaging their thoughts as they converse so earnestly together? There comes a sudden pause in the music, and conversation has died down at the same instant. But a murmur of voices proceeds from the direction of the sofa.

"Lovey!"

"Dovey!"

"What would Lovey do if Dovey died?"

"Lovey would die too!"

The nineteenth century girl got her way and she went to college. Moreover she married later on and by and bye she sent her Twentieth Century baby to college too, and the Twentieth Century Girl emerged. She is coming out East now, and she is in her delightful 'teens or early twenties, and she is an interesting study.

She has even penetrated up country as the Twentieth Century missionary girl, and she is making good. I met one of them a year or two ago. What struck me first of all was how remarkably fearless she was. She marched about alone in the crowded native city where I confess I had

ventured timidly, accompanied by a Chinese friend. She shrank from nothing. When war came and hospital was flooded with wounded soldiers she was wanted in the operating theatre, and had to stand by and see such sights as she had never witnessed before. She went a little blue round the lips, but she stuck it bravely.

Or she must learn to ride a pony. Ride a pony? All right! She had scrambled on his back and been tossed over his shaggy little head before one had time to look round. She was at home with every one, with a hail-fellow-well-met air that rather astonished the conservative up country Chinese women, who had been taught to walk along the street without even raising their eyes from the ground for fear they should look at a man!

She wore simple, sensible clothes and tackled every job that came along. She talked of spiritual things in plain, straight-forward language. She was willing to listen to advice but not at all backward in telling you what she thought the better way. She took the thin with the thick. When holiday time came she rushed down to Hong Kong, bought a pretty dress and a Manila hat and had a good time. She went bathing by moonlight and tramped over the hills. She flew round the Hong Kong shops and bought bargains for her friends up country, arriving breathless at the last moment on her steamer for her return trip to the Interior, laden with a zinc bucket for the blind evangelist, an assortment of shoes for the staff, a drum of Jeyes fluid for the hospital, and a sack of flour for the housekeeper.

If somebody pitied her as she turned her back for another year on all the delights and comforts of Hong Kong life, she opened her eyes wide with surprise. Her attitude was that of the Apostle Paul when he said — "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ." She was a typical Twentieth Century girl, and she was so busy with what came to her hand that the I-Who-must-be had almost eclipsed the dream girl, the I-Who-may-be, which she had cherished in her secret heart; though the dream girl did poke her head up sometimes and insist on being recognized.

Of course what I have just given you is the picture of a Twentieth Century girl who has got her vocation, but I have discovered still another type out here in the East. She has just come out from school and she is bent on a good time. She is

jolly well not going to "sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam." Amah can do all that for her! She has brought some youthful enthusiasm with her though! She will take up something— Sunday School work perhaps, and she will of course keep up her reading. She rather thinks of making a study of some of the problems of the Far-East. And she will certainly keep up her music. Perhaps she will take a course in short-story-writing.

In a remarkably short time, alas! Life is discovered to have become absolutely choc-à-bloc. People don't go in for Sunday School and religious work out here. It's absolutely not done. Sunday is a day for recreation and pleasure. As for the problems of the Far-East, the only problem which greatly affects her is how to get the Chinese tailor to give her a decent cut for her new frock. And the one thing to be avoided like the devil is *spare time* on one's hands, time to think seriously or to read a solid book. Life must be full up to the brim or it isn't worth living.

I was reading the other day of a married boy and girl, Edie and Eddy. They were always at it, always enjoying themselves — the baby was a rather tiresome incident until it got ill and then it was something to be terrified of and its death was almost a relief. Their past experiences had not prepared them for anything like this. They were frightened. The only thing was to forget the whole dreadful nightmare as quickly as possible— so "on with the dance!"

I don't know Eddy and Edie, and I don't want to, but if this is the result of Twentieth Century freedom and fun and care-free life, then there is something wrong with Twentieth Century young motherhood. And there is something wrong out here when babies turn with a cry from their mothers, who are almost strangers to them, and hold out their little hands to their amahs. I have great sympathy with the Shanghai Baby, whose auto-biography has been published lately, in which the baby says he has just heard that he is to go to England next month with his father and mother and he is very sorry to hear it, for *he doesn't like travelling with strangers!*

You don't have to get very far along in life before it is possible for the I-Who-am to come face to face with the I-Who-might-have-been, and to feel conscious of absolute failure. But God be thanked, there is still time for the I-Who-may-be! The clay is not yet hardened. There is still

the possibility of moulding it into something truly worth while. There is a little poem by Helen Choate called "Surrender" :—

"This is your life," they said, "to fashion as you will,"

But I was never very good at sculpturing.

I had no teaching, ever, and I have no skill.

And so I hand the clay to you, who are more fit.

Some day, perhaps, to make a lovely thing of it.

It reminded me of Martin Luther's translation of a verse in the thirty-seventh Psalm—"Rest in the Lord and *let Him mould thee.*" There are no other hands into which I would dare to place that "lump of clay," but I have absolute and complete confidence in those nail-pierced hands outstretched to take it from me. And having yielded my life up for His moulding I can say with the Beloved Disciple—"Now are we the children of God and it doth not yet appear *what we shall be*, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Noel

Last night the master of this house made up his mind that some long-neglected correspondence must be attended to at once. He opened his desk, took out his fountain-pen, wrote a few words, then stopped and looked at them.

"Have you ever thought," he said suddenly, "that no document is valid unless it states how long ago it is since Christ was born?"

All the different nationalities gathered together in this colony—they are all doing the same thing! At the Police Station, the Indian orderly, a Mahomedan, writes his report for the day and heads it with the date reckoned from the birth of Jesus Christ; the Sikh policeman makes a note in his book under the same date. The young clerk in your office—a Jew—does the same, and the Japanese, a Shintoist and the Chinese compradore, a Confucianist. And so the fact of the birth of a Child in a manger of a stable of Bethlehem still stands recorded at the head of our correspondence year in and year out in spite of the strenuous efforts of so many people to shake our faith in the Christmas story and to dim the joy of Christmas time.

They tell us that the account of the birth of Christ is a 'pretty legend for little children,' that 'the Virgin Birth is a myth and it is foolish to deny that Jesus Christ was most 'probably the son of Joseph the carpenter.' We haven't had much time lately to read the Bible carefully, but we were brought up to believe that the story of the Babe in the Manger with all that preceded it and followed after, was to be received as absolutely reliable. But if wiser heads than ours reject it all, what shall *we* do? Shall we just neglect the religious side of Christmas time, and make it merely a jolly time for the children, a round of pleasure and dancing and Christmas fare for ourselves? Is that all the critics have left to us?

Sidney Dark, the journalist, says.—

“A number of curious people who call themselves Modernists, who yearn to run with the hare of faith and to hunt with the hound of science, who desire to attend the meetings of the British Association, and also to inherit eternal life, suggest that it is possible to accept Christianity without believing the facts of the Christian religion. They say that it is not necessary to believe in the Virgin Birth of Our Lord or in his Resurrection from the grave. They talk of “re-stating the faith in modern terms,” puerile nonsense to be compared with the teetotaler offering his guests ginger-beer and assuring them that it is champagne The mediaeval man believed, and I believe, that nearly two thousand years ago in the country of Judea a Man was born of a Virgin and that thirty-three years later he rose from the dead. These amazing happenings were the logical result of what had occurred before. They were unusual, unprecedented, miraculous. That is admitted. But miracles *do* happen. With all its machinery and all its theories and all its much overrated knowledge, the modern world has discovered over again that life is unendurable if it be regarded as a mere material phenomenon beginning with birth and ending with death and confined within the limits of earthly experience.

“The men and women, therefore, who find in the old faith not only the solution of the problems of life but the strength to face its difficulties, and the promise that there will eventually be splendid compensation for its disappointments, *cannot be brushed aside as the victims of superstition* in an age when famous scientists converse with ghosts by the eccentric method of table gyrations and middle-aged novelists photograph fairies in woods.”

This straightforward language is rather bracing after all the would-be clever modern jargon one hears so much of nowadays. We all want to be labelled ‘thinkers’ : we do so want to be up-to-date and we dread more than anything to be behind the times. It reminds me of a certain well-known lecturer who was addressing some students in a college in America. The lecture ended, the meeting was thrown open for questions. The students immediately plunged into questions concerning the Virgin Birth. The Doctor glanced up and his eye fell on a picture of the Madonna on the wall of the auditorium. He stepped down from the platform and

quietly turned that picture of the pure, holy face of Mary towards the wall. Then he went back to the platform. "If I," he said, "were going to discuss the virtue of my beloved Mother, I could not do it with her face looking at me. If we are to discuss a question which touches the virtue of the Mother of my Lord I must first turn her face to the wall!"

The very best thing we can do is to renew our personal acquaintance with the Bible account of these things. The simple, straightforward language, the story as Joseph may have told it to Matthew, with all a man's reserve, and as Mary passed it on to St. Luke with all the deep, intense emotion of a woman, is so marvellous, so divine, that as we read it carefully and prayerfully, there comes a profound conviction that *it is true*. Can we conceive that James, the brother of our Lord would have allowed Matthew to write and publish such an account of the birth of his mother's first child, if he had not known and believed it to be true?

It is as if the Babe of Bethlehem comes down again and asks us searchingly—"But whom do *you* say that I am?" And our hearts can only cry—"Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God!"

There is a story of a small boy, who sat on his mother's knee one Christmas morning listening with all his little heart as she told him of the Baby in the Manger. Suddenly he looked up, his little face aglow—"Mummie, if I had been there in Bethlehem, I would have taken my two sheets and my pillow, and I would have called out loud, 'Wake up, Joseph, here's my two sheets and my own pillow to make a bed for the baby Jesus'—I would!"

The mother looked down at the flushed, eager face and she understood why Christ had said He wanted us to become like little children with eyes of faith to see the vision, with a pure heart of love to yield up gladly, instantly, personal ease and comfort in order to make a resting place for Him, who laid aside his kingly glory to become the Baby in the Manger.

Perhaps there are some of us in this colony, who have lost the Vision. Long ago at home as little children we lay awake and listened to the Christmas bells, and thought of the Baby in the Manger, but we have drifted far from there. The reading of many books and many theories has dimmed our faith in the story of Christmas Night, and we have begun a'most to doubt if it was possible that Christ was

in deed and in truth the God-Man, the Jesus who was called Saviour, because as the angel told Joseph— “He shall save his people from their sins.” I think that is the meaning of this quaint little poem by Agnes Grozier Herbertson :—

Old John Jones down Leveridge way
He is that simple—so people say—
He hid a green switch under his sleeve
And went shepherdin' on Christmas Eve.
He went to the meadow by Watson's Mill,
The water that flows there is dry and still,
And never a soul goes by alone,
So he had that green place all to his own.
But on the brightness of Christmas morn
He rushed out cryin' that Christ was born,
His eyes like stars in his head for joy,
You'd have thought they was the eyes of a boy.
A-through the village he went an' more,
Knockin' and callin' from door to door:
He cried that Christ was born again—*new*—
An' the folk that heard him, they thought t'was true.
He said that angels and angels came
An' filled the meadows wi' bits of flame,
An' sang of Christ that was born that day,
He rather thought t'was down Leveridge way.
Folk told old Parson; they tell he said,
After ponderin' a bit in his head,
That Christ might surely be born again
For simple and true-believing men.
He said he rather wished he'd a'been
Wi' old John Jones in them meadows green,
Hearin' the golden angels say
That Christ was born—down Leveridge way.

If for some of us the Vision has been obscured by mists of doubt and unbelief, may He indeed be born once more for us, may the Vision be renewed as it was for the old man in the meadows down Leveridge way, that once again by faith we may know and believe that Jesus Christ is in very deed the Son of God as well as the Son of Man, who took upon Him the likeness of our sinful flesh, but now is exalted at the right hand of God on high!

“—— And a Happy New Year!”

A well-know resident in this Colony was once talking to me about her knowledge of the Chinese language...“Of course,” she said, “I know ‘Man, man’. That means ‘Go slowly,’ doesn’t it? And then I know ‘Lie by,’ the Chinese name for Sunday. But that’s really all I know!” There is still another Chinese phrase, which some of us have added to our repertoire— “Kung hei : faat tsoi !” the Chinese New Year greeting. “Congratulations : may you grow rich !” And we have its equivalent in the English language. The old-fashioned greeting— ‘A merry Christmas and a Happy New Year’ has often been changed to— ‘and a prosperous New Year’. A Happy New Year or a Prosperous New Year?

Is prosperity happiness then? A great many people seem to think it is. We have often watched the Chinese around us, very busy in preparation for the New Year, scraping off the tattered old orange-coloured papers around their doors and pasting up newly written ‘pious’ wishes. ‘May the five blessings come down at this door’ and the five blessings are—Good Luck, Happiness, Long Life, Prosperity and Peace. Sometimes one sees another Chinese phrase, which may quite correctly be translated—‘May crooked gains fall into my hands’ which is understandable in a country where gambling is nothing short of an obsession. Another paper, on a blank wall facing a shop, announces—‘May those opposite me grow rich’ and one knows well enough it has been pasted there by no other than the owner of the shop himself! So it seems that all over the world worldly prosperity is reckoned as the root of true happiness, in spite of a thousand and one proofs to the contrary.

The Apostle John's wish for his friend Gaius was that he might prosper and be in health even as his soul prospered. Most of us would be painfully poverty-stricken if our worldly prosperity were exactly in proportion to our soul-prosperity? Of course we all want to be rich! There is the compradore's bill at the end of month, to say nothing of rent and servants' wages and clothes and boots and cars and golf and sport. You can hardly step across the threshold before 'Bang goes ten cents' in a ricksha ride or a bus ticket. And somehow one's income never seems quite big enough to meet one's requirements! In fact we all agree with the man, who defined 'Enough' as 'A little more than you've got.'

No doubt there are some careful souls out here who have learnt to love economy and if the reason for economy is that of John Murray's, the old Quaker, we envy the self-restraint that can accomplish it.

It was said of John Murray that once two ladies called upon him to contribute to some charitable object and that as they entered the room they noticed that he had been writing by the light of two candles. But now he blew one candle out, and one lady whispered to the other—"We shan't get much here!"

He listened to what they had to say, and contributed one hundred dollars. The first lady said openly;—"Mr. Murray, I am agreeably surprised. I did not expect to get a cent from you."

The old Quaker asked her the reason for her fears, and she told him honestly the little incident of the two candles. "But" he said quietly, "That is the reason why I am able to give you a hundred dollars. That is why I practise such economy. One candle is enough to talk by."

One would have had no scruples in wishing John Murray 'a prosperous New Year!'

There is no prosperity so sweet as that which comes to us as the result of our own hard work. Some years ago in a certain Japanese village, the villagers were busy gathering in the rice harvest. It is no wonder that a single grain of rice seems precious in the eyes of a Chinese or Japanese, when you think that every tiny rice plant has been planted out *by hand* by men and women standing for long weary hours in the thick mud. And these villagers had a particularly successful crop.

At last the harvest was gathered in and they looked with pride on the rows of stacks all completed. Now for a little relaxation! The whole clan set off down the hill to the village on the plain lying between the hills and the sea.

Only one old man remained behind. He was the head of the clan and was too feeble to have any desire for the fun in the village and the long steep climb up the hill home again. So he stayed behind and wandered round the homestead, looking with joy upon his well filled stack yard. He was a rich man. The coming winter held no terrors for him.

But even as he looked something caused him to turn his eyes seawards.

Far away in the distance he caught sight of a mountain of water rushing towards the land. He knew it at once for a tidal wave, and he knew too that before long the whole of the low-lying village would be submerged and every soul lost. For one instant he stood paralysed with horror, then without another moment's hesitation his mind was made up. He ran from one stack to another, setting light to the precious fruit of those months of toil. The flames leaped up and cast an angry glow upon the sky. Amazed and despairing, the merry-makers below gazed up at the awful conflagration. Then rage and disappointment lent wings to their feet, and one and all they rushed panting up the hill. The tidal wave swept in and over the deserted streets and houses of the little village, but found no living soul for its prey. The men and women, who had run panting and sweating up the hill, looked at the smoking stacks and down at the dark swirling water below and then at the old man, who had lost his harvest, and they knew that for their sakes he had become poor that through his poverty their lives might be saved.

Instinctively our thoughts turn to our Lord Jesus Christ, 'Who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich', rich in pardon for our sins, in peace, in joy and in power.

So we are safe after all in wishing each other the Chinese New Year's wish—"Kung hei faat tsoi."

"May you grow rich" with the heavenly riches which no man can take from you!

Must !

Two women were pacing the deck of a P. and O. liner and discussing the old, old question, "When shall we arrive in Hongkong?" They came to the conclusion that they might possibly reach port at dawn the day after to-morrow. Then the younger woman looked curiously at her friend and said,

"I wish you would tell me what life will be like in Hongkong! I have asked several people, but they none of them have succeeded in giving me a very clear idea. Of course Jim has written to me regularly since he came out, but even his letters have n't enlightened me very much.

"Oh," replied the older woman enthusiastically, "Hongkong is a delightful place to live in—plenty of fun, plenty of sunshine, plenty of servants and plenty of good times. What more can one want? Only there are certain things that one must remember at the start. For instance you *must* get to know the right people! It's fatal if you get into the wrong set at the beginning.

"Then of course it is absolutely essential to dress well, and keep up-to-date in your appearance. And it's not difficult to do that; the Chinese tailors are very good at copying a model, and the Jap shoemakers turn out some excellent foot-gear. Of course all your best things you get from home or at the European shops. Things are very expensive, I confess, but you simply *must* dress well if you are to get on socially in the Colony.

"And another thing you must do is— take a keen interest in sport; we are great on tennis and golf and that sort of thing. Exercise is so essential if one is to keep well.

In fact you really must put aside some of the old Puritan ideals you have evidently been brought up to (Oh yes, I've been watching you since you come on board!) You must give up the old-fashioned English Sunday. We really can't be too religious out here, and our men folk must have their recreation. Most of us give the whole Sunday to outdoor life—golf and bathing parties and that sort of thing.

"You must learn to be broadminded, you know. Most of the old religious beliefs have been exploded by now. And anyhow it is possible to be quite religious nowadays without being strait-laced. It's much more fashionable to go in for Theosophy or Spiritism or one of the New Cults than just to cling to the old faith.

"Then— excuse me if I seem rather personal— aren't you just a tiny bit old-fashioned about some things? I notice you never go in for cocktails, and you never play for points. In fact I don't think I've seen you play either Bridge or Mah-Jong, have I? You really *must* you know! Everybody does, and you don't want to be left in the cold!"

The younger woman laughed rather ruefully—"There seem to be plenty of things I simply must do," she said, "but is there nothing I *may* do *just my own way*? I thought this was the age of the emancipation of women? It seems to me, according to your picture of life in the Far-East, women are simply the slaves of— what shall I say?— slaves to the *must* of the Majority!"

The dressing gong boomed along the decks at that point and the older woman went down to her cabin. The young one still paced up and down thinking deeply. Then she too went down to her cabin, fetched her Bible and a pencil, and ensconced herself in a quiet corner. She was not a missionary and she felt a little shy of being seen on deck with her Bible on her lap. She was just a bonny English girl coming out to be bride to a young Scotsman in the Colony.

Later on in Hongkong when we got to know each other, a few weeks after her marriage, she brought me the result of her findings.

"It was that word "*must*" which stuck in my mind," she said laughing, "I'm afraid it aroused a little demon of opposition! Why must I do all these things just because everybody else did them? And yet you know," she added wistfully, "it is awfully tempting to go with the crowd, and one does hate to seem peculiar or snobbish! But these words,

settled things for me"—and she placed a little list in my hands. She had headed it—The Musts of Jesus Christ, and below she had written:—

He said,

I must suffer many things.

I must be about my father's business.

I must be lifted up.

I must work the works of him that sent me.

I must bring other sheep.

I must needs go through Samaria.

"All that long, hot, dusty journey just to help one sinful woman!" she exclaimed as I come to the end of her list, "There was really only one *must* for our Lord and that was—I must obey my Father!" And I think, don't you, that is the only must for the servant of Christ—must obey!

"I don't think I am an admirer of Mussolini," she added laughing, "but I did like the way he spoke to his followers about their rights." The Fascisti have only one right, he told them, "the right to do their duty".

I took up a magazine lying at my elbow—"Somebody once said to John Wesley," I read, "Mr. Wesley, you become monotonous! Why are you always preaching to us that we must be born again?"

"Because," said Wesley tersely, "you *must* be born again". That is the first essential Must in the New Testament, and the second is the one you have just given me—must obey. It sums up the "whole duty of man" as the old catechism used to call it!"

I looked at the little bride rather anxiously—"But are you quite prepared for what it is going to cost you to follow that line of action in this Colony? It will be most frightfully difficult at times!"

"You to talk to me like that!", she cried. Then she glanced at her watch—"Five o'clock!" she exclaimed, "I must fly or I shall be late. Jim said I must be sure to meet him as he leaves the office. There it is—*must* again! Why, that's the solution of the whole thing. Love takes all the bitterness out of duty!"—and she flushed a rosy red, kissed me good-bye and was gone.

Borrowed Books

This has been quite a busy day! It started last night with a discussion round the fire on the christian duty of carefulness in little things of life. Somebody had been reading "Memories of a Long Life" by a well-known preacher; and came across a paragraph where he described the effect of an address given at a great Christian convention in a country town in the North of England, where thousands of people gather every summer for a week's conference. This is what he read:—

"I had been speaking on our Lord's demand, that if a man were offering a gift before the altar in the Temple, and suddenly remembered that his brother, down in the city, had a cause against him, he must leave his gift, return to the city, and make it right with his brother, and only then presume to offer the gift. My audience was therefore urged to go to their lodgings, write letters of apology asking forgiveness, returning umbrellas and loaned books, and paying their outstanding debts. The result was that on the following morning there was such a call for money-orders, that the stock at the post-office ran out!"

Somebody else in the circle round the fire happened at that time to be reading David Grayson's "Adventures in Understanding." She had reached the point where he flung himself down on a couch near the fire for a good time with some little old books which had belonged to his father:—"In my shelves . . . I came upon a set of old, green-clad volumes, gold-lettered, that I have known as long as I can remember . . . They had belonged first to my father, and bore within their covers his characteristic book-plate with the blazoned motto:—The ungodly borroweth and payeth not again."

After all this there was nothing for it, of course, but to begin immediately to weed out all the bookcases and piles of magazines and set to work to return them in all humility to their rightful owners. There will be some pleasantly surprised people in the Colony to-morrow. I expect they had almost forgotten to whom they really did once lend that book—it was so long ago!

What a nuisance it is—hunting up paper and string, and finding a coolie to take the parcel! Then there is the chit-book— one uses it so seldom nowadays when the phone is so handy, that it is a good quarter of an hour before its whereabouts is revealed. But it must be done— it has simply got to be done—“The ungodly borroweth and payeth not again.”

In that most fascinating two-volume book of Walter Page's life and letters, there is one note which he sounds again and again, almost as insistently as the Chinese guard sounds his long, piercing trumpet-call from the old city wall at sundown. “Why are we so lacking in courtesy?” If the American Government, he urges, would only deal courteously with other governments, and other nations, the United States would soon hold the world in the hollow of its hand. On another occasion he almost tears his hair over the desperately long delay in Washington between the receipt of a courteous message from the British Government and the acknowledgment of it by America.

He is always and ever urging it— Why can't we be more courteous? Courtesy is a mighty weapon in the hands of those who know how to use it. . . . The two volumes have gone back to the library and I am quoting from memory the impression the book has left on my mind. And if governments have to learn to be courteous surely it is necessary for individuals to learn the same lesson, particularly christian individuals. “Be courteous,” urges the Apostle; and it is the spirit of courtesy which will make us careful in the little things. But we are all in such a hurry nowadays. There doesn't seem time to acknowledge unnecessary letters, to thank people for little kindnesses, to be careful about keeping uninteresting engagements.

Ostentatious politeness is of course a thing to be abhorred. One is merely annoyed with the man who springs up to open the door, or to fetch a chair, with the self-conscious air of “See what a little gentleman I am!”. But the unconscious courtesy that springs from the habit of thinking of others, the “habit of self-sacrifice” as someone called it— is a godlike thing. It is an apostolic command—“Be courteous”— and a habit that grows on the child of God as he lives and walks with his Lord along the common paths of daily duty.

The Budding Fig Tree

Not very many years ago a well-known author wrote a book proving most conclusively that the Jews never could, and never would want to, return to their own country and rebuild their national life.

It was interesting to open "Punch" the other day and to find a cartoon of Sir Alfred Mond bringing grapes of Eshcol and milk and honey as spoil from the land of Palestine where he had just lately been on tour, and presenting these to the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who was to be present at a complimentary dinner given to Sir Alfred Mond.

Sir Alfred Mond has brought back much more than a bunch of grapes—he has brought a report of extraordinary developments in Jewish colonization and Jewish industries, of cities rising in the desert, and a harbour in construction at Haifa capable of taking the Mediterranean Fleet.

He reported that in the desert not far from Jaffa a city, Tel-a-Viv, has sprung into being "with a population of 25,000 people, with 138 factories unsullied by a single smoke stack."

"Jews from Poland have sold up and gone to live there. One man started silk-weaving, another started a tannery, and there are now boot and furniture-making factories all in full swing. The city grows in size every day. All the factories have entirely up-to-date machinery of the best type, bought from all over the world. The power is supplied by the Palestine Electric Corporation, and Tel-a-Viv, in consequence, is a city without a chimney. The power is generated by semi-Diesel engines."

So after all, in spite of our brilliant author and his conclusive proofs, it seems that the Jews *could* and *would* return to the Holy Land when the time appointed actually arrived!

As for the grapes of Eshcol Sir Alfred Mond says—"Agricultural development is keeping pace with industrial expansion. Palestine is essentially a fruit and vegetable country, not a wheat country. The orange trade is very flourishing, and the grapefruit is the best I have ever eaten. I have suggested that it might be possible to supply England with early vegetables. Irrigation is being planned, which will mean that three or four crops will be obtained in the same year. . . . Around Jerusalem there are now springing up two or

three garden cities with good-class houses costing between £2,000 and £3,000. I would like to see some of the people from our slums go out there and be put on the land. The children there are a perfect joy to behold."

Fruit and fresh vegetables and watered gardens and three or four crops a year reminds one of the promise given in Leviticus—"If ye walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them, then I will give your rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and your threshing shall reach unto the vintage and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time." But between the time of the giving of that promise and this present day stretches a weary time of many, many barren years when the curse and not the blessing fell upon the nation because of disobedience—

"But if ye will not hearken unto me I will do this unto you—I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as brass : and your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit."

Like all God's prophecies every word has been fulfilled and when disobedience came and rebellion and self-will, then came drought and distress so that the weeping prophet, Jeremiah, was forced to cry—

"Lift up thine eyes and see—thou hast polluted the land with thy wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withholden and there hath been no latter rain."

And so it literally has been for many hundreds of years—the latter rain which should fall about the spring-time (since the Jewish year begins in the Autumn equinox—about November) has not fallen. But it is a remarkable fact that some years ago "it began to fall again just at the time when the eyes of the Jews were being turned in real earnest to the land of their fathers."

"Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things—for He hath given you the former rain moderately and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain."

There is another prophecy, which is being fulfilled before our eyes to-day—the prophecy in the third chapter of Zephaniah—

"Then will I turn to the people a pure language (or 'changing impure language I will give them a pure language')".

A short time ago the Jerusalem correspondent of the London Times reported the celebration of the first anniversary of the death of Eliezer ben Yehudah, "who went to Palestine forty years previously, determined to revive the Hebrew language, which had practically lain dead nearly twenty centuries; and to habituate his fellow-Jews to the use of this language in every department of their lives, public and private." When Ben Yehudah arrived in Palestine, he found that the 50,000 Jews then living there, all looked upon Hebrew as the 'holy language,' the language of Scripture and of prayer. To use it for any other purpose was considered a blasphemous profanation. So Ben Yehudah was anathematised and 'cut off from the congregation.' When his children died no one would help him to bury them. No one would lend a hand to carry his dead wife to the Mount of Olives for burial. His brother Jews got him thrown into a foul Turkish prison for some months, on a false charge.

"But Ben Yehudah persisted, editing newspapers, organising societies, teaching in schools . . . until his ideals spread and a generation arose in Palestine which knew no language but Hebrew. He lived to see Hebrew recognized as an official language of the government of his 'homecountry,' the official publication in Hebrew of a parliamentary White Paper, the insertion of a clause in the terms of the British mandate over Palestine protecting the rights of Hebrew, and a census return according to which 96 per cent of the Jews of Palestine declared Hebrew to be their mother-tongue." "Surely, comments the Spectator, "the achievement of Eliezer ben Yehudah is one of the most extraordinary in human history."

The Jew to-day settled in his own land, sees the 'latter rain' falling once again. He hears around him once more the pure Hebrew language. He watches the train gliding past his village along that 'highway from Egypt into Assyria' foretold long years ago by a prophet among his own people. He sees Jewish national life like a fig tree in the spring-time beginning to show signs of vigorous life once again. But he has not yet ears to hear the words of his rejected Messiah when He says :—

"Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that He is nigh, *even at the doors* . . . Watch ye therefore for ye know not when the Master of the House cometh."

On Seeking a Vocation

versus

Looking for a Job

When we come to that thrilling moment in our career when our education is supposed to be "finished" and our life-work about to begin, one of two things must happen. Either we are free to seek our vocation, or else we are driven by force of circumstances merely to go out and *look for a job*—and a job is a very different thing from a vocation!

Some one gave me a dictionary for a Christmas present the other day and I looked up those two words—Vocation and Job. Vocation, says the dictionary, is "Divine call to, sense of fitness for, a career or occupation," and the word comes from the Latin *vocare*, call.

A job, on the other hand, is "a piece of work, especially one done for hire or profit." Most of us "do our job" simply and solely because we must earn our bread and butter and a shelter for our heads, and the only "call" about it is the call of necessity.

There is no doubt that the people who have found their vocation have the best time of it. It is painful to see a man, who would make an ideal pioneer in Canada, tied to a desk in Hongkong; or a lover of Nature cooped down in the engine room of a P. and O. liner. But a good deal of this incongruity between our vocation and our job could easily be avoided if we were trained during our school days to think more seriously of the future and the life work which must be ours.

If I had a son I would begin very early to find out what he liked doing best, and while I concentrated on strengthening as much as possible the weakest points in the character, I would give him every possible encouragement to develop himself on the line of his strongest inclination. For it is an axiom that the best work we do is that done with our heart in it.

It is a dreadful future that resolves itself into a series of "jobs" without the inspiration of vocation, which means so often lifelong disappointment and drudgery. And yet if that inward voice which calls a man or woman to a vocation is strong enough and insistent enough, it will win out some way or other, as it did with Mrs. Beecher Stowe, who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* simply because she couldn't help it— wrote it in the kitchen on a piece of paper balanced on her knee — wrote it between household jobs and family cares, wrote it until she had finished and given it to the world, *because it was her vocation*.

And the very opposite of that is the man, who shirks his job because it is heavy or difficult—the kind of man the Apostle Paul was thinking of when he advised every man to "abide within his calling," not to go around seeking for a soft place like the negro cotton picker who groaned at his work—

"O Lord! de cotton am so grassy, de sun am so hot, de work am so hard, dat I t'ink dis darky am called to go an' preach."

There are few people in the world with time and means and opportunity to follow their true vocation without let or hindrance. They have obeyed that inward "call," and have brought to their life-work an enthusiasm which will carry them over the crest of many waves and billows of opposition.

But even to such there is bound to come a time of horrible reaction, a moment when everything has lost its flavour and the idea of carrying on in the calling wherewith we are called becomes absolutely revolting. We all know that moment. It comes to the artist and the business man, to the woman in her home, and to the professional man alike—a moment of blackest depression and nausea—the moment when we feel that everybody else's job is preferable to our own, that if we could only change work with the other man we could make good, whereas the work beneath our hands is absolutely repellant to us.

Even the missionary knows his dark hour. The thrill and fire of the great dismissal meeting in London, the warmth and enthusiasm of the farewells on the dock side, the glow of self-sacrifice have carried him along so far. But he has arrived on the field to find himself in some vast upcountry native city, in a most uncomfortable native house surrounded by sounds and smells which combine to petrify him with horror and astonishment. And his high calling, his heavenly vocation, need to be very clear and very insistent, if he is to wrestle through those first few months of disillusionment and disappointment.

Do you remember Kipling's Mulholland? It was simply a knowledge of "vocation" that pulled him through, though he just called it "doing what he was set!"—

"An' I spoke to God of our contract, an' He says to my prayer :

'I never puts on My ministers no more than they can bear.

So back you go to the cattle-boats, and preach my Gospel there.

For human life is chancy at any kind of trade,

But most of all, as well you know, when the steers are mad-afraid.

So you go back to the cattle-boats, and preach 'em as I've said,

They must quit drinking and swearing, they mustn't knife on a blow,

They must quit gambling their wages, and you must preach it so,

For now these boats are more like hell than anything else I know.'

I didn't want to do it, for I knew what I should get,

And I wanted to preach religion, handsome, and out o' the wet,

But the Word of the Lord were laid on me, and I done what I was set."

After all that is what it all comes to— doing what we are "set to do" by the Father in Heaven, who has called us with that high and holy calling, which is alike for the king and the beggar, the free man and the slave. The Apostle Paul wrote his inspired letters to slaves, among others, Christian men living in bondage to Roman masters, knowing nothing of personal liberty. Yet he urges them, these slaves, to walk worthy of their calling, for *their spirits were not in bondage*: they were set free in Christ Jesus their Lord, and that is a vocation which may be ours too, no matter what our job in life may be. For the vocation to which the Redeemer calls us is simply, by faith in His atoning sacrifice, to claim the right to be called the children of God and to walk worthy of this our calling. And this vocation clashes with no "job" so long as it is a "clean" job. It runs alongside it, even though that job may be the most strenuous, thankless task to be found in all the Colony. And who knows? The very drudgery we are enduring may be fitting and moulding us for a position of high rank and authority in the Kingdom, which is soon to be set up on earth when the Prince of Peace Himself is coming to reign.

“The Third Day He Rose Again”

There is no fact in history which has clearer or more unmistakeable proofs of its veracity than the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. His enemies would like to suggest that He did not really and actually die upon the cross to which He had been nailed. And so it is recorded for us in detail how three sets of witnesses affirmed that He was dead—the Roman soldiers, His own disciples and the Jewish priests all knew for a fact that it was a dead Man, whose body was taken down from the cross and laid in the rich man's garden-tomb.

A celebrated doctor writing of the resurrection from a medical point of view said that it is impossible to imagine a patient, whose body had been wrapped in Eastern burial clothes laden with a hundred pounds' weight of spices and placed in a tomb, reviving after all those hours, rising up, rolling away an enormous stone, coming out and *with wounded feet*, walking three or four miles to the city.

And the suggestion that the disciples saw only a vision, such as Sir Oliver Lodge or Conan Doyle would expect to see, he rejects entirely as proved impossible by the statements of spiritists themselves, who affirm that the subject must be thoroughly prepared and in the right mental and spiritual state of expectation before he can expect such a vision to appear before him. On the contrary the disciples had given up all hope of ever seeing the Master again upon earth. In grief and bitter disappointment they were mourning Him as gone from them for ever. And Thomas went further still and refused flatly to believe the statements of the others until he saw with his own eyes and touched with his own hands the hands of his Blessed Lord.

That was no mere spirit-vision which the tired, hungry fishers saw waiting for them in the grey dawn on the shores of the lake, but a living, actual Man, who had with his own hands prepared an actual meal and lighted a blazing fire down there by the water's edge, that his forlorn disconsolate brothers might be warmed and fed and comforted, and thrilled too with radiant joy at the sight of their risen Lord.

After all, have we ever doubted the truth of the Resurrection? I think not. That is not the trouble.

An old miner in California strayed into an enthusiastic camp meeting in the woods. A keen American girl appro-

ached him and asked, "Do you love Jesus?" "Well, Miss," he replied "I can't say that I do, but *I have nothing against Him.*" And if we are really honest with ourselves to-day, that is exactly what the majority of us would say. It is not that we do not believe or that we find it hard to accept the Gospel narrative...it is simply that we are indifferent. Life is too full to allow us to trouble much about religion. It rushes on from morning to night, and through the night to the next morning sometimes, and there is no time to think.

After all what difference does the fact that Jesus Christ rose again make in my life? Sometimes we need to be startled into thinking about things. Does this startle you? Some one once said:—

"When the Eternal raised Jesus from the grave, and took Him to Himself, He by that act hurled the whole race to destruction." When God the Father by the strength of His might raised Jesus Christ from the dead, He set His seal on everything that Christ had taught and had done. He showed His divine approval of the Redeemer, He accepted the finished work of Calvary and endorsed the teaching of our Lord Himself when He said that the whole world had failed to reach the standard of perfection demanded by a holy God, and that it was only those who believe on Him who should not perish but have everlasting life.

Like the old miner we may say that 'we have nothing against Him!' But evidently the time is coming when He will have this against some of us, that though we vaguely accepted the facts of His birth, His life, His death and His resurrection, we never troubled to enquire what these facts really meant and *what they demanded of us.*

It would be good if at this time, we do not just accept the fact of Easter as a reason why we are justified in taking a few days off and perhaps even making up our minds to go to church for once, to enjoy the music and the flowers and the general feeling of Spring time and festivity. May be we 'have nothing against Him', but the Christ who died for us and is risen again, is waiting for us this Easter day, many of us who used to love Him long ago, but have forgotten Him, and He seems to look down to the very depths of our worldly, shrivelled hearts as He says— "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, that thou hast left thy first love..... Remember from whence thou art fallen and repent.....or else....."

Three Hours in Macao

Two of us had reached that "breaking-point" where it seemed absolutely imperative to flee the Colony to see new sights and fresh faces, to eat food cooked by somebody else's "boy", and to do what we liked even for a few short hours.

We went to bed one night with our minds firmly fixed on a holiday the next day; and the goal of our ambition was—Macao. We started out with just \$10 each in our pockets, and blessed the country that made it so easy for people to travel about with the minimum of exertion even at 7 a.m. on a fresh autumn morning. A cup of tea by our bedsides at dawn, rickshas at the door to take us to the ferry, more rickshas on the Hongkong side to convey us to the steamer; and in no time we were on board and comfortably settled in deck chairs with our books and paraphernalia beside us on a little rattan table.

We had chosen our books with care—First a little clear print Book of the Psalms, *the* book for a holiday: then an old copy of Historic Macao by C. A. Montalto de Jesus, and lastly a Life of Robert Morrison by W. J. Townsend. The history of Macao is long and very wordy, but careful digging brings to light quite a lot of interesting matter about this quaint little Portuguese colony on the boaders of the great land of China.

As our steamer glided along in the early morning air, and we passed island after island seeming to float like some fairy land in a mist of pink and blue and soft pearl grey, we realised what a happy hunting ground this China coast must have been in those long ago days for the hordes of wild pirates who made the lives of peaceful Chinese country folk almost unbearable.

In sheer desperation (so says our Jesuit author) the Chinese appealed to the Portugese, already sailing and trading in China seas, and promised them Macao as a magnificent "cumshaw" if they would rid them of these pests. In 1557 the deed was done, and Macao became a Portuguese colony. I should like to have seen it in those old days—the little city, a curious replica of a Southern European port, springing up on Chinese soil, the white men and women with their habits and customs so strange and barbaric in the eyes of the Chinese—the new style of buildings, the ships coming and

going with their valuable cargoes from Japan. A very old Chinese document contains a description of this period :—

“In the district of Heung Shan . . . there is a promontory which runs out into the sea, and is connected with the mainland by a narrow isthmus only, as the water-lily is supported by its stalk. The town is built upon this promontory, and is wholly inhabited by strangers, without any Chinese at all among them. The soil produces neither rice, salt nor vegetables, all of which are sent to them from the interior . . . One of these people’s peculiar customs is to salute by taking off the hat . . . We receive from them in trade articles of ivory, amber, coarse and fine woollen cloths, redwood, sandalwood and pepper and glass.”

It was all too true, as the settlers afterwards found to their cost, that the new little colony did not produce any foodstuffs. But in the early days, when gold and silver poured into their coffers and the merchants became so enormously wealthy that they could build themselves luxurious palaces and live surrounded by slaves, little they cared to be troubled with farms and fields. They very soon abandoned the outlying fields to the Chinese and lost them forever.

It is curious in the light of what is happening in this colony of Hongkong to-day to read how history repeats itself. The Chinese even in the sixteenth century began to make use of the boycott as a valuable weapon lying to their hands ! They soon saw how this wealthy little colony of Macao had grown to depend entirely on the Chinese for their food supplies. What was easier when the Chinese Officials found their exchequer too low for comfort, than to declare a boycott on the Portugese until a substantial sum of money was forthcoming as a bribe ! Then once more the barrier gates would be opened and Chinese farmers would bring their loads of rice and fruit and vegetables to sell at a goodly price to the “foreign devils”.

By the time we had dug all this information out of our history of Macao it was getting near to 11 o’clock and it seemed a long time since breakfast, so we summoned the boy and enquired if tea were obtainable. Yes, of course it was, and in a very short time we had tea, fresh milk and hot buttered toast on the table beside us. When we had finished our tea we were in Macao, creeping into the inner harbour with its masses of Chinese junks and sampans swarming with dark-

skinned women and children. A few steps took us past the fantan houses, those gambling hells which have been the curse of the place. They had no fascination for me. The old days when gambling dens were forbidden in China are long past. Then Macao, already a ruined colony, opened her gates to the gamblers. I have stood in a street in China and watched the country people, coming out of the city with their hard-earned money, drawn to the fantan tables like flies into a spider's web, and coming out, later on, trembling with fear and wailing bitterly as they stumbled along the homeward way, all their money gone. I have seen the bitter despair on a Chinese woman's face when she came to me looking for help, because her own husband had *gambled her and his children* away to another man, who already had a wife and children of his own. No, the fantan shops did not attract me.

Just round the corner two motor buses were waiting. "Take the black one" a kindly officer had warned us on board, so we took the black one, and paid our fares and were puzzled for the moment to receive more money back from the conductor than we had originally given him, until we remembered that it was merely a little matter of the value of the Hongkong dollar versus the Macao coinage.

We rattled and swayed and hooted through the narrow cobbled streets and here and there I caught a glimpse of the quaint little old houses with their latticed windows and panes made of oyster shells which had attracted me years before on my first visit to Macao. One can almost see the Portuguese dames of long ago passing along these cobbled streets, attended by their negro slaves, and the motley crowds of Japanese, Malays, and Indians who came and went in the days when Macao was at the height of her prosperity.

Up the steep incline and through the market square our chariot took us—the market square where in olden times grim scenes were enacted at public executions. On to the barrier gates where the fair used to be held; and buyers and sellers had a bad time of it in the long ago days when bands of Chinese soldiers stationed there to keep order really caused terrible trouble to the quiet country folk.

To-day there are other tragedies being enacted on the Chinese territory beyond that barrier gate. More than one English woman in Hongkong has seen her cook or her house-boy return from this Heung Shan district beyond Macao, with a piteous tale of the sufferings of the Chinese at the hands of

the Reds, who are trying to prevent them from coming back to Hongkong via Macao. "Missis", said one boy, when he crept back "They caught them and strung them up in the hot sun and left them there all day long. Then they took them down and threw them into the water. My come along road in Heung Shan, my see plenty men makee die by road side. My very fear, makee hidum in sampan, give sampan man \$15 bring my back to Hongkong".

I thought of these present-day tragedies as I stood at the barrier gate in the blaze of the mid-day sun that beautiful autumn day. Then we climbed back into our black bus and went trundling along the quiet streets, past the Dutch gardens, down the hill and on to the picturesque praya, where Portugese soldiers stood lazily watching the passers-by, and ricksha coolies made a rush for us as we entered the hotel.

We asked the clerk to direct us to the little old English graveyard where the first Protestant Missionary to China lies buried. The clerk did not know that I understood Chinese and I heard him say to the ricksha men, "Take them to the Temple of the Red Haired Ones". Whereupon the coolies seized the shafts and flew along the praya and up through winding narrow streets until they brought us to the wonderful flight of steps leading to that most extraordinary ruin, the facade of St. Paul's which has been standing there, gaunt and solemn against the sky, ever since the great church was burnt down nearly a century ago. The date on the foundation stone is 1602 and the artisans were actually Japanese converts to Roman Catholicism. Carved statues of four Jesuit saints adorn the facade, and one of them is St. Francis Xavier himself. Angels in the attitude of worship, and the tree of life, are all there and the whole wonderful ruin is crowned by a cross of Jerusalem in bronze, probably cast at the Bocarro bronze foundry.

It was standing here, so it is said, that a former governor of Hongkong received his inspiration for that beautiful hymn beginning:—

In the cross of Christ I glory
Towering o'er the wrecks of time:
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round it's head sublime.

There are many traditions covering St. Paul's. The Jesuits were supposed to have had secret subterranean passages beneath the church where vast treasure was hoarded.

History says the interior was the "most imposing and most richly ornamented in Macao". But the glory departed when the Jesuits were evicted from Macao, and a fire which started in the seminary, then given over to the government and used as military quarters, destroyed the church.

We turned and made our way down the grass-grown steps to our waiting rickshas. Another short journey and we were at the door of "Temple of the Red Haired Ones"—the little old English Church with its early Victorian interior, its prim little seats and pulpit. One could picture the door set open for Sunday worship and the little group of English women and children in their tight-fitting and most unsuitable costumes filing in and taking their places in those stiff seats, while the breeze stirred the trees outside and the twittering of birds reminded them almost painfully of their own country so far away. More than once in the long ago, English merchants had to send their wives and families for refuge to Macao, while they themselves endured a great deal of hardness in Canton. This was before the days of Hongkong, but it is interesting how history repeats itself. We are asked to believe that the troubles which we are going through to-day are due to the dawning of a beautiful "national" spirit in the heart of Young China. But long ago Old Grandfather China played just the same tricks, and when he wanted to harrass the English taking refuge in Macao, he decreed that all Chinese servants should leave their English masters, and the English thus deserted had to seek for Portuguese servants or get along as best they could.

Some of them could not get along; and heat and worry and fever laid them low and we found the last reminder of those brave early pioneers in the quiet God's-acre behind the little church, where old grey tombstones lie half hidden by the tall grass. In one corner lies the tomb of Robert Morrison, the man who first gave the Chinese the Bible in their own language. What it cost him to accomplish this stupendous task without helpers, without dictionaries and other aids, it is impossible to calculate. There was hardly an obstacle that he did not encounter from the very first. The Chinese were forbidden to teach him the language under penalty of death. He had had difficulty enough in getting to China at all. The East India Company forbade him to travel on their ships, and he had to come to China by way of New York.

In New York, arriving very late in the evening at his

host's house, he was put into a bedroom where stood the cot of was a little child already fast asleep. By some oversight the cot was left where it stood, and the little one waking at dawn was startled to see a stranger in the bed beside her. She pulled herself up in her cot looked solemnly at him and said, "Man, do you pray to God?" "Oh yes, my dear," said Morrison instantly, "He is my Best Friend." Perfectly re-assured the tiny child laid her head on her pillow again and fell asleep.

And so this "friend of God" pushed on to the colossal task that was awaiting him, and when the sarcastic shipowner, who was to arrange for his further voyage asked him with a sardonic grin, "So Mr. Morrison, you really expect that you will make an impression on the idolatry of the great Chinese empire?" Morrison answered with more than usual sternness, "No Sir; *I expect God will.*"

Now driven from Canton, now placed under the anathema of the Bishop of Macao, now living in a miserable tumble-down shack in Macao, where the roof fell in, so anxious was he to complete his task of Bible translation that rather than attract the notice of his enemies and run the risk of being expelled from Macao, he went out only occasionally at night, beyond the town along quiet paths lighted only by the moon.

Once when the blocks of a fresh edition of the New Testament had just been completed, they were all destroyed by the printers themselves in a fit of panic lest they should be made to suffer for their participation in the work.

But Morrison won through. He had been through deep waters. Here beside his grave is the last resting place of his beloved wife Mary and her baby son. This rather dull "Life" has here and there an illuminating little paragraph, and it quotes from Morrison's journal a pathetic picture of the family in their seaside home in Macao; Morrison absorbed in his books and Mary sitting at the little round table busy and happy making tiny baby garments and dreaming dreams. Then a sudden illness of two days and she was gone, and there was a dreary desolate home for the man and this quiet grave newly dug in the corner of the churchyard. But he took up his task again with tremendous determination and at last the day came when he could close the book and say, "It is finished", and China had her Bible in her own tongue.

Many years before that day, a man who often went to the library of the British Museum used to notice a young

student deeply absorbed in the study of some strange language, which the man himself could not recognize. At last he could resist the impulse no longer. He went across to the boy, and asked him to tell him what this mysterious language was, that so absorbed his attention. The boy replied that it was Chinese, but when his interrogator asked him why in the world he wanted to learn such an impossible and useless language he simply said that he didn't know himself, only he felt so drawn and impelled to study Chinese that he could not resist the impulse and he believed he would understand the reason later on.

He understood at last when he laid upon the table the last sheet of that wonderful Book of Books, God's greatest gift to China. To-day while missionaries who have been driven from their posts are compelled to wait in Hong Kong for the door to re-open, they have the rest and satisfaction of knowing that while their lips are for the time being silenced, the Word of God is being sold steadily, up and down the land, and 'the Word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.'

We left the church yard and came back to the streets and down to the harbour. There was just good time to get on to our steamer and to order our tiffin before we started home to Hong Kong. The sun was beginning to set as we steamed into this harbour and we landed on the praya with a real holiday feeling and payed the last ten cents of our ten dollar notes in a ricksha to our door.

Wounding — To Make Whole

It was when Margaret's little son died that she first had to face the mystery of suffering—and I think that some of the friends who came to console her added only gall and wormwood to the throbbing wounds in her heart.

Mrs. Well-Meaning gazed down on the exquisite little face and the perfect hands still clasping a flower and she said with tear-laden voice "He looks so perfect, Margaret, so innocent. And there's no knowing what he might have grown up to be. Can't you thank God for taking him now? Think if had grown up to break your heart by and bye!"

Margaret looked wildly at the quivering face, then down on her sleeping baby—"Oh, you wicked, woman," she cried, "to say my baby might have grown up a bad man. Go away—*please* go away!"

I encountered Mrs. Well-Meaning on the door-step. She looked flushed and angry and held her head very high in the air—"She is not at all resigned. Sorrow hasn't softened her, I'm afraid. I should advise you just to leave your card at the door, and not attempt to see her." But I did go in and in the cool, darkened room I found Margaret with her arms flung across the cot sobbing her heart out. After a while she told me of Mrs. Well-Meaning's cruel kindness—"Would *you* have found comfort or peace in such a thought?" she asked, "Oh, they don't know, these people who come to sympathise with me—but what can words do for a broken heart?"

"He healeth the broken heart and bindeth up their wounds"—I quoted, but she held out her hand—"But oh, why does He wound? Why does He wound? Isn't He the omnipotent God and we poor helpless mortals in His hands? He knows we can't resist His will—His dreadful will—"But that is just it! His will is not dreadful," I cried. "It is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

"But it's not acceptable—it's cruel", she said bitterly, "First of all this horrible strike—then Tom loses nearly all his money, and I can't take Baby away to a cool place, and now I've lost him. Is *that* the will of God?"

"Oh, forgive me if I pain you, Margaret, but sometimes I think we have all been so rich and so comfortable and luxurious in this Colony that we have *forgotten* God. And God only knows what blackness of darkness a soul may fall

into that forgets Him. And sometimes like the surgeon with the knife He wounds deeply and terribly, but always and only that by the wounds His own hands have made He may make us whole again." "In His will is our peace because His will is merely the manifestation of His love. You simply wrapped Baby Jim round with your love, but you controlled him with your *will*, and I've heard him scream with anger sometimes because he couldn't have his own little way. And yet you didn't give way because you know that what *you* willed for him was best. You loved him too much not to let him undergo what was best for him!

"So it's not His dreadful will, but His perfect will." He spared not His only Son, but gave him up for us all—After that we can't doubt His love, and His will is the expression of His love."

Margaret lifted her pale face and gazed at me steadily—"It's perfectly true what you said just now—Tom and I had forgotten God, and we used to love Him before we came out East."

I had to leave her then, but I went home and sent her a copy of a little old yellow paper, which lives in my desk, the gift of a woman many years ago, whose artist husband had died and left her with five tiny children and a broken heart and very little money. This is what she gave me as the best expression of what she had been through at that time:—

The conflict, Lord, is ended, and Thy grace
Hath now the victory won,
And taught me thankfully to say,
"Father, Thy will be done."
I scarcely understand how the wild storm
Thus suddenly should cease,
How the long buffeting should end
In unexpected peace.
Once it seemed very hard that Thou should'st choose
What I had loved the most,
To make me say, "Thy will be done,"
At such a bitter cost.
But now I see that it was wisest Love
Claiming its rightful throne,
That in my consecrated heart
Thou mightest reign alone.
My soul is crowded all with silent thoughts
A hush I cannot tell,

Like the strange pauses in a dream
One motion may dispel.
What though the future with its unknown depths
Be hidden from my sight,
I know that its untrodden paths
Lead onward into light.
Yes, I will trust Thee. Thou didst once on earth
Carry our griefs alone,
Thou soughtest comforters to help
And friends, but they were gone.
Thou knowest all my need, upon Thy care
I utterly depend.
Thy patience which has borne the past
Will keep me to the end.

Late on the afternoon of that day I saw the little funeral party pass my door. Margaret was not with them. She couldn't bear the sight of the little coffin lowered into the grave and covered up. But an hour or two later a coolie brought a note from her.

"I can say it now, 'In His will is our peace'. Did I tell you that there is an old motto carved over the door of my father's house in the country at home: —

Come what may come
God's will is welcome

I can say that now from my heart. The conflict is ended!"

Doing It Yourself

A Hong Kong "strike" is a wonderful eye-opener! I venture to assert that many European women know more about the state of their pantry floors, their sinks, their ice-boxes, than they ever did before — and that many European men will in future look with respect and sympathy upon the market coolie if ever he returns to take up again his "essential service", and to toil once more up hill and down dale and along scorching streets with that well-known basket slung over his shoulder.

There is nothing in the world to equal the experience of doing things yourself. It puts you in the other man's place more completely than any amount of theorizing about the other man's job!

There will be many tired women in this Colony when the strike is over, but there will be fewer babies, who will be heard to cry — "No wantchee Mummie, wantchee amah!". By that time mother and daughter will be intimately acquainted. So this wind is not such an ill wind that it is blowing *nobody* any good!

There is another discovery we are all making and that is how much better we do things for ourselves than our servants do them for us. The master of the house flapping round in his kimona and bath-slippers, grins with contentment as he makes the morning tea with really boiling water, and pours it, a deep golden brown, into the tea-cups. Then there are one's shoes, once so terribly thick with boot-polish and now a joy to behold, and the topees, formerly caked with powdery whitening — now so discreetly whitened and so tenderly treated. Oh, won't we have a few things to tell that house coolie when he comes back!

Of course there are a few of us, who have been blessed with really good servants, and a good servant, like a poet, is born not made. You can recognize him immediately by the way he takes hold of his work. I came across such a

one lately. She was the rawest of raw material from the country. She sank into a chair in the corner of the dining-room while she waited at meals, but she noticed immediately if you wanted anything. And she shrank from nothing. Even the geyser in the bathroom had no terrors for her. Hot water was needed and she must supply it, and it was only when the household was startled by a bomblike explosion, that she realised she didn't quite understand how to control this new thing called "gas." Members of the household arrived on the spot with blanched faces. For herself she was unperturbed. She "would understand it better next time." She belongs to the class of born servants, but as I said before they are very rare. Most of us do things better for ourselves than any one does them for us.

I have come to the conclusion that we serve ourselves so well *because our hearts are in it*. And it is the same with our public services. We serve at counters, we cut up ice and beef, we guard the Colony and run the trams and ferries with an enthusiasm and a doggedness of spirit aroused within us partly by love of our Colony, partly by British pride, and partly because this thing touches our homes and our children. *So our hearts are in our work*, and we do it better than the paid hireling, who has departed reluctantly and mournfully to Canton. Oh, we have proved that we can make good servants to ourselves — because our personal interest is in our work.

Then what about applying that principle to our Christian service? Why am I such a slack Sunday-school teacher, such a lukewarm Sunday worshipper, so careless with regard to prayer and Bible study? I'm afraid that in the light of recent discoveries, we are bound to confess that, like our former house-coolie, our hearts are not in our work! And I am acutely ashamed of myself when I remember my Lord, who "took upon Him the form of a servant and became obedient." I want to be at least as keenly interested in my service to my God as I am to-day in serving myself and my family. I pray for that "grace whereby I may serve God acceptably" — that in the future I may work for Him with an eager willingness, which shall "make His service my delight." And that this may be so, I crave from my God that heart of love, that holy enthusiasm, which He alone can kindle within me. I will *run* the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart."

Worrying

"Yes," said an old lady reminiscently, "I have suffered many troubles, *most of which have never happened!*"

That has been exactly my experience too. Night after night as a child I have taken a flying leap into my little bed because I knew there was a burglar hiding underneath it, waiting to grab my little toes as I jumped between the sheets. Then when I came out East and the burglar terror vanished, it was brigands—or pirates, or robber bands in inland China, or else it was being wrecked on the rapids, or attacked by a heathen mob. And after all these years in China I can look back on this list of terrors and say, "None of these things ever happened to me." Other troubles came, but not the ones I had worried about. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles".

'A crowd of troubles passed him by

As he with courage waited.

He said, "Where do you troubles fly,

When you are thus belated?"

"We go," they said, "to those who mope,

Who look on life dejected :

We go where we're expected."

I sometimes wonder if John the Baptist was beginning to worry as he lay in that horrible prison and caught the echo of the wonders that Jesus Christ was working. This Holy One, who could open blind eyes, and heal lepers, who could cast out demons, yes, and raise the very dead, *when* was He coming to His servant to open the prison doors and set him free? The time seemed very long, and hope deferred was making his heart sick. So he sent his message:—"Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" and the Saviour sends back the answer — "Go, and tell John what things ye have

seen and heard ; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

Not one word of pity or regret or even sympathy, just "blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me" That was all, but I think John ceased to worry from that hour.

"God always answers prayer," said a little child, "Sometimes He says, Yes ; and sometimes He says, No".

Oh Son of God, to right my lot
Naught but Thy presence can avail.
Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,
Nor on the sea Thy sail.
My now or when Thon wilt nor heed,
But come down Thine own secret stair,
That Thou mayst answer all my need,
Yea, every bygone prayer.

Our Lord gave us a direct command when He said, "I say unto you, Be not anxious"; and we are told "Cast your burden upon the Lord". And that reminds me of a story, which has the advantage of being absolutely true. It is this :—

A young and very successful doctor opened a sanatorium for his patients and his mother came to live with him and superintend things. It was a colossal task and she threw herself into it heart and soul. From morning till night she hurried from room to room. In the kitchens and pantries the cooks dreaded her coming. The house maids and waitresses knew that her sharp eyes would detect some invisible dust however hard they worked to bring things up to her standards. Not content with her own department she even attempted to control the professional nurses in their wards, but here she had to confess she made very little impression. The strain was tremendous and the inevitable result followed. The poor lady had a nervous breakdown and suffered from sleepless nights, or else, what seemed worse, dream-laden sleep.

One night she dreamt that she was walking along a road, and as she passed she saw a bundle. She felt impelled to stoop and lift it up. A little further a second bundle appeared in her path. She stooped and picked that up too, and then another, until her arms were full and she staggered beneath the load. And as she crept wearily along she dreamt that Christ Himself came down the road towards her, and she

cried to Him and said — “Ah Lord, I cannot carry all these bundles. They are too heavy for me!” And He looked on her and said “My child I never wanted you to.” “Then” she said as she flung open her tired arms, “I won’t carry them a step further!” And she dropped them at His feet.

And in her dream as she stood on the road, she thought she saw a deep ditch running by the road side; and in the ditch were little red demons with pitchforks throwing more bundles into the way before her; and she cried “Ah Lord! have I been doing the Devil’s work?” and she thought He looked on her again and said, “My Child I never wanted you to”.

All through the following day she stayed alone in her room, and an unusual peace brooded over the house. The morning after she came down she took up her work as usual, *but without any sense of burden*. The great sanatorium began to run on oiled wheels. She had learned to cast all her cares upon Him, who cared for her.

“I have no cares, oh blessed Lord,
For all my cares are Thine.
I live in triumph, Lord, for Thou
Hast made Thy triumphs mine!”

Stowaways

The steamer had left port two days before and the passengers settled down again to the old routine and were feeling a little bored and dull, when along the deck came one of the ship's officers gripping the arm of a filthy, ragged specimen of humanity with furtive eyes and twitching lips. Sleepy passengers were suddenly awake and everybody sat up to look—"Whatever have you got there?"

"A stowaway," said the officer curtly, "they were shifting some cargo and found him hidden away in a corner just now." There was a little buzz of talk and excitement but the incident was soon forgotten and nobody thought of it again until they reached the next port and were most annoyingly detained in quarantine because the stowaway was discovered to have brought smallpox on board with him.

"A ship has its proper cargo and passenger list, but there are burdens which a ship is not supposed to carry. Many a life is carrying to-day passengers *who ought never to have been allowed to come aboard.*"

There are stowaways in your life and mine, which we vaguely hope will never come out into the open. There are secret sins, and weaknesses of which we are horribly ashamed and yet we cling to them. Then comes a sudden shifting of our circumstances and in a flash the "stowaway" is exposed to the public gaze, and somebody says, "I never should have dreamt that he would have done a thing like that!"

We have clean forgotten the good resolutions we wrote down in our diaries while the Old Year was "dying in the night". Perhaps it would be a good thing, not to turn back to pick up the fragments of broken resolutions, but to have a determined hunt for the stowaways we are carrying.

Thoughts of which we are ashamed are stowaways. We hide them carefully in dark corners even from our dearest

friends, and we flatter ourselves that, thank goodness, nobody else even guesses at the things we think about. And all the time we are laying up a bad day for ourselves when the cargo of life is suddenly shifted and the stowaway stands there naked and revealed, for "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he". Those unclean thoughts were contaminating the whole life, just as that stowaway stricken with smallpox was contaminating the ship.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me." That is the only safe attitude. Self-examination is the most hopeless and unprofitable thing. God never asks us or wants us to try to examine ourselves, but He is willing to do it for us if we are willing to place ourselves unreservedly in His hands. And He expects our whole-hearted co-operation.

We know well enough, we who suffer from thoughts of which we are ashamed, that there are sources of contamination, which we must cut out of our lives if we are to have our thoughts "spring-cleaned." There are those novels we get from the library. We call them "studies in psychology", and other pleasant-sounding names, but the first time we read such books we felt ashamed to be seen with them in our hands. That was long ago. We are more accustomed to that kind of literature to-day. This is the age of outspokenness. Look at the plays, the cinemas, the magazine articles, the new dances.

We *do* look, and we *do* read and we *do* think—and when we reach one of these sudden pauses which *will* come in life and which we dread so much, when there suddenly seems to be nothing to do and no one at hand to talk to, then the thoughts bred by the books we have read and the plays we have seen come flocking into our minds and we hasten with shame to hide them away in the darkest corners we can find—"stowaways", but we have forgotten that "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he"

We see it again and again out here in the East. We think we know each other through and through, when a sudden shifting of cargo or a conflagration comes along—a strike or a boycott or a war and in an instant the stowaways come to light and confound us. The man we thought so plucky reveals his cowardice, the business that looked so prosperous exposes its rottenness. The stowaway of secret

self-indulgence has wrought it's havoc, the secret motives so long hidden from the light stand revealed by the fresh turn in our circumstances and the stowaway can no longer be kept concealed.

There was once a great king who carried a "stowaway" in his life and who persuaded himself that only himself and one other knew it. But there came one day to the palace a man who turned a flashlight upon that dark spot and exposed the stowaway in all his filthiness, and the king was ashamed and confounded. But he did the best and wisest thing. As soon as he saw his "stowaway" in the light of God's day, he humbly and sincerely confessed his sin, and obtained forgiveness. "Purge me with hyssop," he cried "and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow". And when he spoke of hyssop he was thinking of the cleansing of the leper and the ceremony which had been ordained of God in which hyssop had a part. For now that his stowaway stood revealed, the king perceived that the hidden sin had been as vile, as repulsive as the rotting flesh of the leper outcast. He saw his sin for what it really was. And when a soul cries, "Purify me, cleanse me", and cries it honestly from his heart, the answer always comes immediately, "I will: be thou clean", for the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Through the grace of God we can and we will get rid of the "stowaways".

Spoils from the Treasure Mountain

At the end of January, 1926, there arrived in Wuchow, a city on the West River, four Chinese men with long matted hair and unkempt straggling beards and faces bloated with the unhealthy signs of beri-beri. They were four honoured workers in the Alliance Mission at Wuchow. Last summer anxious and worried over the affairs of the Mission they decided to venture on a journey to Hongkong to take counsel with their friend and leader, Mr. Jaffray. It was a perilous undertaking, and they found to their dismay that owing to the strike and boycott, then at its height, it was impossible to get through to their friend. At Kongmoon the door was closed; they went to Macao and found that there was no getting through that way. Then they actually pushed on right up to Shanghai and there too they were entirely prevented from access to the Colony of Hongkong.

Sad and disappointed they turned their faces homeward up the West River, realising that they must put their whole trust in God and seek wisdom from Him to bear them through this difficult time of crisis. Sitting together on deck the four men were just congratulating themselves on the ease and safety with which they were making their return journey when shots were fired and in a moment all was wildest confusion. Armed men sprang forward from among the passengers to help their comrades attacking from without, and in a very short time passengers and crew were completely overpowered. "I have often thought of it since," said Mr. Chao, one of the four, "the sudden attack from without was so successful because of the immediate response from within. It is the same in the spiritual world — the Enemy can't hurt us from without if there is no response from within — *so we musn't let the devil get inside!*"

These four men were seized and searched with the rest. Mr. Chao had his most precious possession in his pocket — a little Chinese New Testament, which he had purchased some time before, fearing that if the anti-christian movement grew stronger and he with others were cast into prison, they might deprive him of his Bible. Realising that they were being taken captive now in the hope of a large ransom he secretly removed the photograph of his wife and child from the Testament and destroyed it. They would perhaps strike the robbers as being well-dressed and prosperous and the ransom demanded would be greater in proportion. Soon the Testament was snatched from him, examined and thrown on the deck: again he rescued it and again it was taken and thrown away. Thankfully he picked it up and hid it in his coat. It was to be his strength and stay for five long months of suffering!

The captives were bound and dragged ashore. Along lonely mountain tracks they were driven, arms tied fast and bound until the robbers fearing that they might stumble over the steep ravines, took knives and cut their bonds to the intense relief of the sufferers. On and on until they reached the robbers' den, where they thanked God that they were not separated but flung with other prisoners into the same tiny room. The dead body of a former captive had already been removed from this room. Who would be the next to be carried out!

Four weary months they spent *chained together by their necks and ankles*. If one wished to stand up they must perforce all stand. If one wished to lie down then all must lie. Day and night the chains cut into their flesh. It was impossible for one to turn on his side in his sleep without a cry of pain from his friends.

In the morning a wet towel would be given them which all four must make the best of, and this in tropical summer weather. If one fell sick they dare not let it be known, for the sick captives were no more of any money value, and they would be taken out, tied to a tree and left to die. The stronger ones would fast and give their coarse provision to the weaker. At night they would lay their hands upon him and pray and healing came. Through the long, dark hours they prayed and God was with them.

Tormented from head to foot with vermin, chafed by cruel chains hungry and thirsty, they were yet able to rejoice

in their God and to trust Him for the fulfilment of His promises.

"We thought of that Chinese proverb," they said, "the one that says *when a man goes into the treasure mountains he must not return empty*," — and indeed they have not come out empty; they have come out rejoicing, bringing their spoils with them.

What then did they find in the treasure mountain? First, they found that *God was there*, the God who had promised, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

They found that His Word was true. He healed their sicknesses, gave them courage and victory, so that they could even laugh and see the humorous side of their troubles.

They found that their word as christians was always trusted. The robbers relied absolutely on what the four men said. Their fellow captives when they wanted to ask a favour would whisper. "Hey, you Jesus-man, ask for me, they listen to you!"

They found at least one soul hungry for the Bread of Life, and had an opportunity to preach Christ to the robber chief himself as well as to his men.

When the robbers suggested cutting off their captives' ears, some of their number cried. "That will be no good. They will not mind! And even if you kill them, they will only rejoice that they will go all the sooner to that Heaven they are always talking about!"

There are many precious spoils these four men of God have brought with them out of the "treasure-mountains" of suffering and experience. And best of all they have come out with a "renewed commission." As they lay there in the stench and darkness there came to Pastor Chao a vision of the day of his ordination and the sermon that was preached then flashed back upon his mind. "I felt as if I were being sent anew," he said. God set them free after five long months of testing — four months in chains and one unbound, for the robbers removed their chains and set them loose at the end of the fourth month so that if by chance soldiers pursued them they could force their captives to run and so retain their prize.

When I read the letter from our Wuchow friends telling

how the ransom had been paid and the men set free at last, I could only think of the christian blacksmith's reply to his friend, who was reminding him of the many trials and difficulties he had had to face since he became a christian.

"I thought," said the friend, "that when a man gave himself to God his troubles were over. Isn't that what the parsons tell us?"

The blacksmith thought for a minute, then he looked up with a smile—"Do you see this piece of iron?" he said, "It is for the springs of a carriage. I have been 'tempering' it for some time. To do this I heat it red-hot, and then plunge it into a tub of cold water. I do this many times. If I find it taking 'temper', I heat and hammer it unmercifully. In getting the right piece of iron, I found several that were too brittle, so I threw them on the scrap heap. Those scraps are worth about a cent a pound, this carriage spring is very valuable."

The listener nodded and the blacksmith continued :--
"God saves us for something more than to have a good time, that's the way I see it. We have the good times all right, for God's smile means Heaven. But He wants us for service just as I want this piece of iron. And He has to put the 'temper' of Christ in us by testing us with trial. Ever since I saw this I have been saying to Him, 'Test me in any way you choose, Lord, *only don't throw me on the scrap heap!*'"

Thoughts in a Garden

*A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot,
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot,
The veriest school
Of peace ; and yet the fool
Contentds that God is not —
Not God ! in gardens ! when the eve is cool ?
Nay, but I have a sign,
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.*

T. E. Brown.

*The Lord God planted a garden.....and.....took the
man and put him into the garden to dress it and to keep it.*

Gen. 2:8, 15.

In the dawn of the world the Lord God planted a garden : then He took a man and put him into the garden to keep it. Now a garden is a place where plants are disciplined that they may bring forth better flowers and more fruit — Adam was to 'dress it and to keep it'.

And the garden was for Adam himself a place of discipline — "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat."

Adam, as he dressed that garden and kept it, passed to and fro and watched, as every true gardener must watch, the bud becoming blossom and the blossom turning to fruit. He thought the slow thoughts of a gardener as he went about his work. Every tree had its name, but one tree alone was named the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he must not eat of its fruit. But why?

“The savage is innocent of many of the crimes of civilized man because he has no opportunity to commit them : the child is innocent of some of the vices of manhood because he has no temptation to them. But this innocence is the result of circumstance, not of character : and if savage or child is to become a mature moral being *he must be tried by altered circumstance*, by temptation and opportunity The fruit of this tree is prohibited to indicate that it is only in presence of what is forbidden that man can be morally tested, and that it is only by self-command and obedience to law and not by the mere following of instincts that man can attain to moral maturity.”

So the gardener ponders as he goes about his work. He thinks about that tree and the fruit of that tree, and he begins to understand that it is within his power to disobey. “He is put in a position in which good is not the only thing he can do : an alternative is present in his mind, and the choice of good in preference to evil is made possible to him.”

It is only during working hours that the thing possesses his thoughts or concerns him in the slightest. In the wool of the day, when the flowers are asleep and the day’s work is done, the thought of that tree troubles Adam not at all, for God comes down and walks with him in the garden.

“Not God! in gardens when the eve is cool?

Nay but I have a sign,

’Tis very sure God walks in mine.”

But I think with the morning and the workaday hours there came again the thought that chafed and fretted. Why did God withhold from him the “knowledge of evil”? And when Eve comes to him with the fruit in her hands, he takes it and eats of it.....“So the Lord God sent him forth from the garden,” and when the last rays of the setting sun shone again through the trees, they found the garden silent, empty and deserted.

* * *

I like to think that on the resurrection-morning God once more walked in a garden in the cool of the day, but it was the cool of dawn and not of darkness, and a new day was breaking, life coming out from death — and Mary supposing Him to be the gardener, hears His Voice and falls at His feet in adoring worship.

What difference was there in our Risen Lord that Easter

morning that Mary Magdalene did not immediately recognize the Saviour, Who had delivered her from "seven devils", and set her free? Was she blinded by her tears, or *was* there a difference? Something He had deliberately laid aside in the "days of His flesh" He had taken again, now that He had overcome death. He came and went, unhindered by material limitations. He appeared among His disciples even when the doors were closed: He vanished out of their sight as they sat at the supper table: and He ascended into Heaven and disappeared from their vision.

And we too have the promise that when our resurrection morning dawns we shall be changed — we, His redeemed disciples, "shall all be changed", and the change will be infinitely greater, for we shall be "sown in corruption, in dishonour, in weakness," but raised in power and given a spiritual body. But the natural man does find it so hard to believe this glorious fact!

In my garden everything is getting ready for Easter, every flower and tree seems on the point of bursting into blossom and shouting 'Glory!'. Some of them can't wait for Easter and are in bloom already — the lupins, the roses, the heliotrope and the freesias. And tucked away beneath the leaves in quiet corners are a thousand chrysalises, which whisper softly, "If a man die shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."

You remember Mrs. Gatty's parable of the Butterfly and the Caterpillar. The dying butterfly had laid her eggs on a common cabbage leaf, much to her own surprise and distress. Just before she breathed her last, she implored a humble caterpillar to act as nurse and guardian to the baby butterflies when they should leave the eggs. The caterpillar was greatly distressed. She was naturally so limited in movement and vision: she had had no experience in bringing up exquisite winged and painted butterflies. How was she to provide honey and dew, the only food suitable for such tender creatures? How was she to protect them from a thousand dangers? She implored the lark, because he soared the highest to find out for her what should be done to feed and guard the butterfly babies. And the lark came back shouting for joy and full of good news. The babies, he said would require nothing but common cabbage-leaves for sustenance, at which the caterpillar waxed highly indignant,

but her wrath knew no bounds when the lark assured her that they would not be butterflies at all but only green caterpillars like herself.

The lark reproached her want of belief, but the caterpillar only replied indignantly, "I believe everything I am told — at least every thing *within reason!*"

"Then I'll tell you something else," cried the lark, "You will one day be a butterfly yourself."

"Nonsense," shouted the caterpillar, "I know what's possible and what's not possible, according to my experience and capacity, as well as you do . . ."

The lark reasoned of the need of faith, but his words only fell on deaf ears, until behold, even as they argued, eight little green caterpillars burst their eggs and began to nibble a hole in the juicy cabbage-leaf beneath them.

Amazement turned to joy as the old caterpillar watched them. If the first wonder was possible, the second might be so too — and for the rest of her life she never ceased to talk of the time when she would be a butterfly. Even when she was going to her chrysalis grave she said — "I shall be a butterfly some day!"

* * *

There is healing balm in the custom of going to 'God's Acre' at Easter time to lay flowers upon the graves of those we love, for life is "waking all around", life triumphant over death. And when the heathen are busy toiling up the hillside with 'Tsing Meng' offerings to their dead of paper money and paper clothes and wine and food to refresh the spirits of the departed, we come with flowers in our hands, the tokens of life and of eternal Spring, for the Child of God knows well that since the Risen Lord walked in a garden in the cool of the morning, we too, who trust in His redeeming blood, have sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection, and not a resurrection to the old, material life of fleshly limitations, but to a glorious 'change', to freedom and joy and satisfaction and service, such as we have only dreamed of before.

The Crescent and The Cross

The scorching heat of the September day was over. The harvest moon was rising, and a little breeze suddenly sprang up fresh and cool and stirred the trees where the wood-pigeons were sleeping. The verandah seemed just then a very pleasant place. On the left what in the daytime reveals itself as a hideous line of sordid tenements, showed now simply black against the silver moonlight. In front, close circled by the trees, rose the dome of the Mahomedan Mosque.

It was during one of those blessed intervals between the rush and rattle of motor buses that there arose from the Mosque the long penetrating call that startled unaccustomed ears in the shadows beyond.

"What is it?" whispered a little child lifting a face of awe and wonder as the long, long cry pierced through and through the quiet night — the call of a human voice, so much more impelling than a mechanical note of bell or gong.

"It is the call to prayer."

"Who are they praying to?"

"To God"

"Then they are like us, aren't they?"

"No — you see they don't pray in the Name of Jesus Christ". Silence for moment — then the roar of motor buses once again and the spell was broken. Chinese voices floated up from below, ricksha coolies shouted to each other, a motor lorry thundered past, and when quietness fell again there came the monotonous murmur of voices at prayer within the Mosque. In the light of the harvest moon on that scented summer night it was easy to yield to the romance of that call, and to thrill to that reminder to all the Faithful to kneel and pray.

A little distance up the tree-shaded road the moonlight was gleaming on another building where the Cross not the Crescent crowned the highest pinnacle. But the church lay sleeping silently and with closed doors — What did it betoken? Was the Muslim more faithful in prayer than the Christian? Or is it that prayer is so truly the breath of life to the Child of God that he stands in need of no reminder to bring him five times a day and more to the feet of the crucified and risen Lord?

A shallow, easy-going man of the world passing down the street heard the Muslim call and said lightly — “There! Listen to that chap. I tell you these fellows are just as religious as the rest of us — *more* perhaps! That’s what I always say — one religion is as good as another”, and he stuck his cigar back in his mouth and strutted on well-pleased with himself.

Is one religion as good as another?

Here, close to my hand, lies a dingy old book that I turned out of an overflowing bookcase only two days ago, and as I open it the word *Islam* catches my eye immediately. It is that call that pierced the night which has aroused my interest. What has this old tome to say about Islam?

First it tells of the rapid rise of the Mohomedan Faith when war and rapine and plunder were sanctioned as holy things, when the vast treasures of Persia fell into the hands of the followers of Mahomed; and the warriors themselves were intoxicated with the wealth of the booty that was theirs.

Little wonder that Mahomedanism made rapid progress in those days and so great was their belief in the joys of the material paradise which awaited them that even death was welcomed and courted.

“Such as fell in conflict were called martyrs”. So the Muslim Faith marched on and triumphed gloriously. And then about A. D. 830, two centuries after the time of Mahomet, so says this old book, there arose a mighty Caliph, Al Mamun, who gathered around him philosophers of all creeds, and who was himself a ‘tolerant and liberal-minded sovereign’.

A member of the Royal family at this time happened to have a friend, who himself was a noble Arab descended from a kingly tribe. He wrote to his friend, who was already at the Court of Al Mamun, and the interesting

correspondence that ensued has been preserved. The letter urges Al Kindy to become a Mahomedan, painting for him in glowing colours the distinguished position he would occupy at Court and the power and privileges which would be his, spiritual and material, social and conjugal. Al Kindy living at the Court received this letter from his friend and writes thus in reply.

“Thou invitest me into the ‘Easy Way of faith and practice’. Alas, alas! for our Saviour in the Gospel telleth us, ‘How strait is the road which leadeth unto life, and how few they be that walk therein! How wide the gate that leadeth to destruction, and how many there be that go in thereat!’ Different this, my friend, from the comforts of thy wide and easy gate, and the facilities for enjoying as thou wouldst have me, the pleasures offered by the faith...

“I marvel much ye call those Martyrs that fall in war. Thou hast read, no doubt, in history, of the followers of Christ put to death in the persecutions of the kings of Persia and elsewhere. Say now, which are the more worthy to be called martyrs — these, or thy fellows that fall fighting for the world and the power thereof? The more the Christians were slain the more rapidly spread the faith — in place of one sprang up a hundred. On a certain occasion, when a great multitude had been put to death, one at court said to the king, “The number of them increaseth, instead of as thou thinkest diminishing.” “How can that be?” exclaimed the king. “But yesterday,” replied the courtier, “thou didst put such and such a one to death, and lo, there were converted double that number; and the people say that a man appeared to the confessors from heaven strengthening them in their last moments”. Whereupon the king himself was converted. In those days men thought not their lives dear unto them. Some were transfixed while yet alive; others had their limbs cut off one after another; some were cast to the wild beasts, and other burned in the fire. No paralleled is found thereto in any other religion; and all was endured with constancy and even joy.

“Now tell me seriously, my Friend, which of the two hath the better claim to be called a Martyr, slain in the way of the Lord: he who surrendereth his life

rather than renounce his faith, or he that goeth forth ravaging and laying waste, plundering and spoiling?

"These followers of Christ published their message by means of miracles — and there came over to them the kings and great ones of the earth. And the philosophers abandoned their systems and became followers of a company of poor men, fishers and publicans, who had neither name nor rank, nor any claim other than that they were obedient to the command of the Messiah — He Who gave them power to do such wonderful works."

So runs this letter written by the hand of Al Kindy over one thousand years ago. To the Arab noble without doubt one religion was *not* as good as another. To him there was only God and Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord and for His sake it was even worth while to lay down one's very life. The glory and wealth of the court were as nothing compared with the joy which came into his life when he received the Lord Christ and obtained the 'right to be called a son of God'.

When dawn broke over the Mosque and once again the call to prayer was flung out on the morning air, the thrill of wonder and romance was gone. The 'faithful' might respond to the cry and kneel in prayer, but what was their prayer? — Well, whatever it was it was not offered in the Name of Him who said, "*Ye believe in God, -- believe also in Me.*"

An hour or two later the other place of worship took up the call — with bells this time — and a few men and women responded and knelt together to remember their Lord's death 'till He come.' "We are not worthy", they said, "to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy . . . Who of Thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ upon the cross for our redemption".

As they rose from their knees and passed outside, the same man went by, who had passed the Mosque the night before — "So you have been to church, have you?" he called to a friend, "Well, I'm going into the country to worship Nature. That's *my* religion. One religion's just as good as another — that's what *I* say!"

The Two Volume Book

Just lately four voices in Hongkong have been expressing the same idea — four such different voices that one's attention is arrested. One was a clever, scientific woman; the second a man of some influence among other men; the third was a young soldier; and the fourth was the echo of a voice from one of the leaders in the Chinese Church in Canton, which reached this Colony in the form of a little pamphlet entitled "Reform." And they each in their own way said the same thing. They made statements which one could only listen to in astonishment because they obviously did not know what they were talking about, or they could not have said what they did.

Perhaps the Chinese put it most baldly. The new Church of China, he asserted, should be established on new lines. They must reject the Old Testament in which "God is represented as an awe-inspiring slaughter-breathing . . . Generalissimo." They should accept the "faith of Jesus whose heart is merciful and whose countenance is benign." This Chinese author finds "in the Old Testament, blood — in Jesus, love." What the other three said was in substance the same, if not quite so crudely expressed.

One listens in amazement. Surely the Old Testament these four have read cannot be the first volume of the Bible as we have studied it? Can it be some new and "edited" edition, which has not yet fallen into our hands?

Glancing through the Old Testament in the authorised version of King James, what do we find? We see in the first few pages a God who refuses to make a man merely an automatic machine, which He winds up at will. He makes him a "living soul" with power to choose which he will — the good or the evil. But He warns him of the results of choosing evil. We see the man deliberately choose to disobey. But we see the just God, even when He pronounces sentence on the sinner, immediately providing him with the hope of redemption. There is the promise of a Coming One,

who, though the Serpent should have power to bruise His heel, yet He should have power to do the greater deed and bruise the Serpent's head. The "slaughter-breathing God", at the beginning of the world's history, promises a Redeemer, and the promised One is His own and only Son.

We see how His purpose runs all through the Old Testament — the choosing of Abraham, the separating of him from the rest of the world, his training and teaching in the desert, the growth of his family into a clan, from a clan to a nation : one of the most fascinating and thrilling histories ever written.

Then we come to the laws of government given to that nation soon after their departure from Egypt. We note God's infinite patience with this nation, so lately emerged from the degradation of bondage under a heathen autocrat. The employment of slaves and the practice of polygamy were not suddenly abolished, but "for the hardness of their hearts" God withholds His hand and by a series of marvellously wise laws He protects the slave in every possible way, and gives him the certainty of freedom in the Year of Liberty. Women, too, were protected by most detailed laws and instructions.

I read in the Old Testament that this God protects the mother bird and her young by law, that He commands the reaper to leave the corners of his fields and vineyards unharvested for the sake of the poor in the land. He commands that none shall be allowed to put a stumbling-block in way of the blind; that it shall be accounted sin to take a poor man's cloak as a pledge for a debt and leave him shivering in the cold.

I find, too, in this Old Testament many of the "comfortable words" that every mourner loves to turn to in time of grief and pain. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" — is in the Old Testament.

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" — is in the Old Testament.

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love" — is in the Old Testament.

This is our tender, merciful God : but He is also the just God Who doeth righteously, and I find that when a nation departs from Him and gives itself over to immorality and vileness so abominable that, even in these days of out-

spokeness, we shrink from speaking of it — this just God takes His sword in His hand and destroys that nation from the least to the greatest, even as a wise surgeon takes the knife and cuts out the cancerous growth for the sake of the rest of the body.

“The talk about the bloodthirstiness of the Old Testament,” said a doctor the other day, “is about as fatuous as the amahs calling me ‘cruel’ because I opened the children’s boils.”

It is true that I find, as our Chinese author says, “in the Old Testament, blood.” I find it in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. I find that “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, that He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities and that with His stripes we are healed.” Yes, there is “blood” in the Old Testament. There is the promise of the shed blood of the Lamb of God, to whom in the New Testament, Philip pointed the Ethiopian Eunuch as he read this chapter in Isaiah and puzzled over its meaning.

I find blood in the New Testament too, I see my Saviour in Gethsemane, as He knelt in prayer, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. I see His five bleeding wounds on the cross and I remember that this is He, “in whom we have redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

And more than that I *have seen* the efficacy of that shed blood. I have seen the peace that comes to the man, who relies upon it for his cleansing. I have known of a murderer lying in Hong Kong Gaol condemned to death, who read there of Jesus and His cross, and who died triumphantly because he had learnt in his last hours to put all his faith in the fact that the “blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin.”

So I find Justice and Mercy in the Old Testament, but I find also Mercy and Justice in the New Testament.

I see the Saviour Himself, meek and lowly, riding into Jerusalem upon an ass. Who is this that cometh? “Thy king cometh to thee. He is *just* and *having salvation*.” And of Him it is said, “Whose fan is in His hand, and He will gather the wheat into His garner, but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable.”

I dare not say of my God that He is kind and tender and merciful, unless I say also that He is just and righteous and true.

“If”

General Bramwell Booth, in his autobiography, says that his father always recognized that there was an individual judgment-seat within every man. He always spoke to men with the remembrance of this before him. The name of that judgment-seat is conscience, “man’s supreme faculty,” which may be relied upon to give an unbiassed sentence every time that it is in a normal working condition.

You remember when the Scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus the woman taken in adultery, He simply said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” “And they which heard it, *being convicted by their own conscience*, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last.” Sentence had been given at each man’s individual judgment-seat and every one of them stood convicted.

I said a “normal conscience” always works like this. It seems that a conscience may become abnormal at times. It may get clogged with “dead works.” It may become “seared with a hot iron,” like the conscience the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about. The condemning voice of the judge has a hard time making itself heard. But Conscience is there and it is impossible entirely to get rid of the troublesome intruder. Even the heathen is aware of the “individual judgment-seat.” He can be shocked at immorality, at injustice, at disobedience to parents — and especially at injustice!

Long ago, during the Mutiny, Metcalfe was escaping from Delhi on horseback, hotly pursued by some native cavalry. “His horse broke down, and in despair Metcalfe appealed to a friendly-looking native to conceal him from his pursuers. The man led him to a cave, told him he would

save him if possible, and striking his horse on the flank sent it galloping down the road, while Metcalfe crept through the black throat of the cave into concealment."

"Presently Metcalfe heard his pursuers ride up, fiercely question his protector, and finally propose to search the cave." The native after some parleying apparently satisfied them that the search would be useless waste of time and they galloped away.

"Why did you save my life?" Metcalfe asked his protector.

"Because you are a just man," was the unexpected reply.

"How do you know that?" asked Metcalfe.

"*You decided a case against me in your courts*" said the man, "I and all my family had won the case in the inferior courts by lying, but you found us out and gave judgment against us. If you had given the case for me I would not have saved your life."

"Our great security against sin" said an old writer, "lies in being shocked at it." The trouble is that in this century there seem to be so many "hot irons" at work searing men's conscience. It is so easy to lose the sense of "shock." In a little old-fashioned library I came across a book by Miss Alcott that I had never seen before, in which she pictures a young girl just up from the country, who is taken by her friends to a theatre. She is thrilled with the colour and light and gaiety, until a crowd of women dance on to the stage, clothed, or rather unclothed, in gauze wings. She sits looking down, her cheeks burning. Her judgment-seat has condemned and she is miserable and distressed, greatly to the amusement of her friends. They argue that this is simply nothing to what she will see by and bye; and she agrees that if she stayed in town long enough she could gradually get so accustomed to such things that she would entirely lose that shocked feeling. But she realised too that her safety lay in being shocked and she chose in future to stay away.

Sin is so constantly being pictured before our eyes that we are all the time unconsciously "getting accustomed" to it. A child sees things at the Cinema to-day that a nineteenth century baby never dreamt of. He is not shocked: he is rather bored and hardly even amused.

Why is it that nowadays we hardly ever meet anyone

burdened with the sense of their own sinfulness? I have seen one now and then in China. I remember an old Chinese dying in the house next to our own. When a missionary doctor sent to ask if he should come and see him or send him medicine, the old man sent his little grandchild to say he was grateful for the kindness, but he would really rather die as the list of his sins was already so long that he would be glad to die before he added more to it.

When Bunyan's Mr. Worldly-Wiseman meets Christian toiling painfully beneath his burden as he sought to reach the Wicket Gate, he says,

"Who bid thee go this way to be rid of thy burden? I beshrew him for his counsel. There is not a more troublesome and dangerous way in the world than this is to which he hath directed thee. And besides, though I used to have some of the same burden when I was young, not since I settled in that town, (pointing to the town of Carnal-Policy over the plain) have I been at any time troubled in that way.

"Hear me, for I am older than thou. Thou art like to meet with in the way, which thou goest, wearisomeness, painfulness, hunger, perils, nakedness, sword, lions, dragons, darkness, and in a word, death and what not."

"Why, sir," said Christian, "this burden upon my back is far more terrible to me than all the things which you have mentioned; nay methinks I care not what I meet with in the way, so be I can also meet with deliverance from my burden."

"How camest thou by thy burden at first?"

"By reading this Book in my hand," replied Christian. . . . That is it! The reading of the Word of God reveals ourselves to ourselves! But who takes time to read the Bible nowadays? Life is far too full for such a thing! And what would people say if they saw us reading the Bible on the Star Ferry for instance, or in the Peak tram, or the train which bears us to Fanling? It simply isn't done! Besides there are so many new theories about sin nowadays. We are rather vague about them ourselves. The general impression is that sin is not really *sin*, but merely "the inevitable result of certain laws" or something of that sort. What *is* sin anyhow?

There is a very simple definition of sin in the Bible. "Sin is the transgression of the law. It goes a step further — "All have sinned." — And further still "He who offends

in one point is guilty of all." These are not theories : they are statements. The voice from that inner judgment-seat confirms the truth of these statement. We know that we *do sin*. As some one once said — If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves (*but nobody else*) and the truth is not in us." We thank our God for the rest of that sentence which begins — "If we sin." If we sin — what? "If we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

George Grubb once told of a missionary going up to the Himalayas for a rest. On the way one of the coolies was suddenly taken ill. The missionary bent over the man, saw that he was dying, and said to him, "Tell me, my brother, have you ever heard of the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Oh yes, Sahib," said the dying man with a smile, and he pulled out a very dirty half-sheet of paper which proved to be part of the first Epistle of St. John containing the words : "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

How did you get that?" said the missionary.

"Sahib, my sins troubled me, and I went to the Brahmins and said, 'How can I get my sins washed away, for the gods are angry with me?' and they said 'Go and wash in the sacred river and your sins will be cleansed away.' So I washed in the sacred river but my sins were as strong as ever. Then they said to me, 'Put hooks in your back and swing on the hooks, and the pain that your body will suffer will cleanse your heart from sin.' I put hooks in my back and I swung on the hooks, but when it was all over my sins remained as strong as ever. As I was going along the road one day I saw that piece of paper and I picked it up, and I read that the blood of Jesus, the Christians' God, cleanseth a man from all sin. Ever since I read those words, Sahib, a peace from heaven has been in my soul. I don't understand much about your Jesus. Are you quite sure He died for Hindoos as well as Englishmen?"

"He died for the sins of the whole world," said the missionary.

"Oh, if that be the case it is well with me," said the Hindoo, and he pillowed his head on the half-sheet of paper and fell asleep in Jesus, the Christians' God.



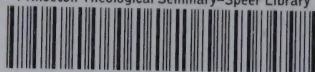
I have to thank the Editor of the *North China Daily News*, also the Editor of *St. Andrew's Magazine*, for permission to reprint these chapters.

W. L. C.

FRATERNITY BOOK ROOM
216 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON
AND
8 DES VOEUX ROAD, HONG KONG.

BW8382 .C63
Looking on in Hong Kong.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00038 0867